

LIFE OF ARAVINDA GHOSE.

LIFE OF
ARAVINDA GHOSE.

R. PALIT.

AUTHOR OF "SKETCHES OF INDIAN ECONOMICS," ETC.



PUBLISHED BY THE AUTHOR,
260, Panchanontala Road,
HOWRAH.

Price Re. 1/8.]

[All rights reserved.

Howrah :

PRINTED AT THE KARMAYOGA PRINTING WORKS

NO. 4, TELKUL GHAT ROAD

BY I. K. SINGHA.

Preface.

LIVES of all great men have some lessons to teach. They reveal the inner spirit of the man working for that Truth which gives us a foretaste of the glorious vision of God. They serve as beacons in our journey through the rough sea of worldly life. The life of Aravinda is certainly a life that can offer many an inspiration for the consecration of our life at the altar of the country's work. This little treatise is not properly speaking a biography,—for biography is professedly a record of the lives of successful men. But the events of the lives of humble men and great, of the successful and the unsuccessful,—prove conclusively that the mournful lines about the "Village Hampden," and the "mute inglorious Milton," are only too faithful a description of the realities of life. Everything is not for the best. The most worthy man and the most righteous cause are not always victorious. But then every life has a grand lesson for us,—whether successful or not. Why should we then ignore it? I have endeavoured in these pages to

make a critical study of the life of Aravinda according to my own light. I have tried to make a right estimate of the man, and also to explain some of his teachings in the light of Hindu culture. Such a study, I believe, has not only a speculative, but a practical value. If carried out in a proper method, it will furnish instruction and warning to the Government and the people, and, in particular, to the rising generation of India. My book has not much of biographical narrative in it, and such narrative seldom goes deep into the mind of any man. In reading the lessons of a life, it is by no means necessary to know all its details. It is properly speaking a series of reflections,—an attempt to read lessons by the light of Hindu culture.

The great aim of Aravinda's life was to nationalise India. Nationalism was the favourite shibboleth of his life, and as, without an idea of what constitutes Nationalism, we cannot understand his creed, I have therefore, bestowed some reflections on Nationalism first. I have tried in those pages to paint a vivid picture of India's past, as I believe, that all our love for the country must be fed from the living fountain of India's glorious past, and this constitutes the basis of

Nationalism. I have then endeavoured to speak at length of the ancestry of Aravinda. There is very little worth recording on his father's side, but there is much worth knowing on his mother's side. I have therefore, devoted some pages to a character-sketch of his maternal grandfather Sj Raj Narayan Bose, whose life and teachings helped to create a Nationalist-spirit in India at a time when English education was just beginning to capture the minds of Young Bengal. I have also tried to give my readers a glimpse of the religious mind of India at that time. I shall feel my labours amply rewarded, if my readers find in the following pages an honest attempt to read the life of the first great Martyr of India.

In conclusion, I have to offer my best thanks to Sj K. D. Banerjea, Late Professor of English Literature, Serampore College, for the kind help he has given me by reviewing the whole of my proof-copies. I have also to apologise to the public for the unavoidable delay in the publication of the book, and to thank those who have encouraged me by their letters from all parts of India.

HOWRAH,
1st June, 1911.

}

R. Palit.

CONTENTS.

Chapter I.

Prefatory Remarks	1
-------------------	-----	-----	---

Chapter II.

The Philosophy of Nationalism	10
-------------------------------	-----	-----	----

Chapter III.

The Philosophy of Nationalism	29
-------------------------------	-----	-----	----

Chapter IV.

Ancestry and Early years of Aravinda	51
--------------------------------------	-----	-----	----

Chapter V.

Aravinda's education and choice of Profession	63
---	-----	-----	----

Chapter VI.

The awakening in India and Aravinda's Life-work	101
--	-----	-----	-----

Chapter VII.

Aravinda as a Politician	119
--------------------------	-----	-----	-----

Chapter VIII.

Aravinda's morality and Religion	
----------------------------------	-----	-----	--

Chapter IX:

Aravinda in Trouble	144
---------------------	-----	-----	-----

Chapter X.

Conclusion	152
------------	-----	-----	-----

CHAPTER I.

PREFATORY REMARKS.

“Take him for all in all
We shall not look upon his like again.”

—*Shakespeare.*

THE key-note of Aravindo's life is his enthusiasm for Nationalism. Without this, he might have been a loyal and illustrious citizen; with it, the world recognizes in him such a hero, as one does not frequently meet with in the long annals of human history. In him, the zeal for that sacred ideal which he had enshrined in his soul, consumed all earthly ties and affections which might have marred the perfectness of his service; and he has been throughout his life, not the mere devotee, but the master-apostle, and the devoted champion of nationalism. This may be admitted even by those who would set Mr. Banerjea, in one sense, above him. Mr. Banerjea is the man of thought, Aravindo, the man of action. Mr. Banerjea has been the inter-

preter and the law-giver of nationalism, during these years of India's march through the wilderness of political thought; but it is Aravindo who has brought his countrymen into the border-land of Canan. India reveres Mr. Banerjea as her teacher and guide; she loves and venerates Aravindo for his self-abnegation, and self-sacrifice in the mighty work of India's salvation.

The mighty genius of modern India, the man to whom no honour is greater than the simple discharge of his duty, to whom no reward is acceptable beyond the triumph of his sacred cause, in whose eyes emoluments and temporal dignities are as worthless as tinsels; who retired from the honoured post of Private Secretary to His Highness the Gaekwar of Baroda to labour as a humble worker in the vineyard of his motherland,—this man whom India justly ranks as amongst the very noblest of her sons, is yet, in the widest and most general sense, the forerunner of the glad tidings of nationalism.

Western civilization had captured the citadel of Young India's heart and begun transmuting it into a shape Occidental in all its phases. Our young men educated in Western literature—nursed from boyhood on the lap of Western Science

and philosophy began imbibing a looseness of morals which contributed much to the degeneration of our race. Stimulated by the continual irritation of an alien Government, by contact with Western Science and Civilization, India to-day is awakening to a new realization of self-consciousness, and the reactionary policy of the Imperial Government, has hastened her recovery, by forcing upon her the necessity for self-defence, and the urgent need for the preservation of her national life.

It was Aravindo Ghose who first brought home to the young mind of India, during the genesis of the Swadeshi movement the dreadful results that would filter down the Hindu Society from the compact of Western Materialism with Hinduism. This recoil from the first indiscriminate imbibing of Western Materialism, has unveiled India's eyes to the intrinsic work of her own spiritual conceptions, and the need for untrammelled expression in art, science, literature, industry, and all lower activities, as a means to the balanced development of the nation as a spiritual unit; while the study of Western ideals of liberty, and justice has recalled to her the necessity for self-government, if any true freedom

is to be realised, if any healthy national life is to be maintained.

Aravindo Ghose's teachings to the young mind of India, have always had as their basis the philosophy of Nationalism. His generous impulses have no doubt occasionally misled him, but he would not be the man he is, nor have won the triumphs he has won, without that very lack of calculating prudence which is part and parcel of an enthusiast's nature.

The unification of India under the banner of Nationalism demanded a man of Aravindo's stamp; and glorious are the records of his achievements in this respect. It is really a mystery to contemplate how he led a disheartened and discordant nation,—as if by the touch of some magic wand—to the triumphant path of nationalism. The task was a stupendous one. Dismembered as India is by diverse castes and sects, and enslaved in mind by the onslaught of European civilization, it was really a Herculean performance to blend all these scattered elements into a harmonious whole.

If Aravindo succeeded in this apparently hopeless task, it was because his unique character was precisely the one which was specially calcu-

lated to succeed. Simple and straight-forward like the Republicans of ancient Rome, he was absolutely untainted by the degrading influences to which the mass of his fellow-countrymen had been subjected. When they had learned the sad lesson of suspicion and jealousy, he had inherited and cultivated the independence of a thoroughly honest and transparent mind. In all but the plain dictates of duty, he is as gentle and pliable as a child. In all but the severity of his hatred of European civilization, he is soft and amiable as a woman. His life even from boyhood, has been a life of self-sacrifice and heroic philanthropy. Self never entered into his calculation, when there was a friend to assist, or a fellow-creature to serve. His purity, his sympathy, his benevolence, his Job-like endurance, and above all, his invincible determination charmed and fascinated all who came in contact with him. There is an indescribable attraction in his very look, which has done more to secure friendship and to gain followers, than years of acquaintance could do with other men.

The unification of India under the banner of nationalism has been the dream of Aravindo's life, and whether it was in the closet of the hall

of education—or in public life, he has always tried to inculcate the lofty teachings of Nationalism. The study of nationalism is especially incumbent upon the youth of a nation, for though older and wiser heads must direct and control, yet, as Lord Beaconsfield said of other times, and places, when to be young and to be indifferent can no longer be synonymous. We must prepare for the coming hour. The claims of the future are represented by suffering millions and the youth of a nation are the trustees of posterity. Plato compared the State to the individual, and the comparison will help us, if we reverse his process in this instance, and reason from the individual to the nation. There are characteristics that are common to both, for man collectively, with all deference to theories of political philosophers such as Hobbes, is not so very different from man individually. What goes to make a man, what he is? His environment and circumstances to some extent, but most of all what we are accustomed to call his character. Character depends very largely on the beliefs that inspire a man. That is to say beliefs not necessarily in any form of religion or dogma, but certain guiding principles by which he directs his

life. The life of our hero was largely influenced by the guiding principles of the tenets of nationalism. What this nationalism, is, we shall discuss later on.

There was assuredly something in this dream of nationalism, well calculated to inflame the spirit of a patriot. India had been the mistress of the world, the bulwork of civilization, the shrine of Learning and Art, the home of Poetry and Song. To be an Indian citizen had been a title of honour; and there was no existing nation, however great and glorious which could match its greatness and glory with those of Ancient India. Mighty rulers like Asoka, Chandra Gupta, and Ramchandra,—poets like Kalidas and Bhaba-buty, have shed undying lustre upon their country. Ages before the era of the Greek philosophers, India had been the leader of the world in logic, philosophy and metaphysics. To-day with the lapse of centuries, with the growth of new nations, new civilizations, and new systems of thought, she still maintains her unrivalled supremacy.

Aravindo's is a memory that will be hallowed while history has any charm, or its lessons any power for in his life is included more than romance

could have imagined of mighty conceptions of nationalism, and more than political philosophy could have conceived of results. The simplicity which no applause can disturb, and no disaster interrupt, is a characteristic very dear to Indians, for it is the distinguishing mark of her best-beloved sons, as it is also of those in ancient stories who are counted worthy examples to succeeding generations.

The exculpation of Aravindo from the charge of conspiracy against the British rule, was hailed with joy all over the country, and his reception after the break-up of the Poona congress astounded even his opponents, whilst it manifested the deep impression his career had made upon the hearts and minds of the people. The most illustrious of India's sons, the tens of thousands of artisans, the magnets of the world's money market, vied in their homage to our hero, who has evidently been raised up by Providence to unite India under the banner of nationalism.

What there is in him of true grandeur could never have been, had he cared to win the applause of the world. Generous, large-hearted, and magnanimous, as Aravindo is, there is something in the texture of his mind that is

above the level of ordinary men in the performance of hazardous task. Unbroken success, unrivalled popularity, imaginative effort flowing almost as steadily as the current of a stream,—these are characteristics, which, even when enhanced as they were in his case, by the power to defy physical pain, and to live in his imaginative world when not in affluent circumstances, fail to touch the heroic point. The finer spiritual element in Aravindo has always been superabundantly in evidence in all his works. Few men who battle avowedly for the right, battle for it, with the calm fortitude, the cheerful equanimity with which Aravindo battled to fulfil the burning aspirations of his soul. He stands high amongst those who have been able to display—

“One equal temper of heroic hearts,
 Made weak by time and fate, but strong in will,
 To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield.”

And it is because the man is so much greater than the ends for which he has striven, that there is a sort of grandeur in the sad fate which has denied them to him, and yet, has exhibited to all the world the infinite superiority of his mighty soul to that of all others.

CHAPTER II.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF NATIONALISM.

BEHIND the disturbances of the Partition of Bengal, stood the philosophy of illumination. The Nationalist movement in India, is nothing but an expression under new circumstances, of our old, old philosophies. It is impossible to understand the aims and aspirations of our hero to-day without some interpretation of this thought-movement in India. To have some idea of what constitutes this movement of Nationalism in India, we should first of all go back to her mighty past, to have a glimpse of the grandeur of our civilization.

When the whole world was wrapped in the dark pall of ignorance and superstition, the sweet light of civilization shed its serene lustre upon four great nations : the Egyptian, the Chinese, the Babylonian-Assyrian and the Aryan. It is India with which we are now concerned, and the story is that of "An Aryan people, at first isolated by situation and circumstance from the out-side world, and working out its own religious

and social institutions, its literature, laws and science; and the story forms one of the most instructive and interesting chapters in the annals of human progress and culture."

Some four thousand years ago the Aryans lived in the land of Iran—washed by the murmuring stream of the Euphrates, and situated at a place where Nature lavished her bounties upon them. In course of time, the growth of population, and the disagreement on religious matters, began moving them from their central position. Some migrated towards Persia, and became the founders of that great empire, and of the Zoroastrian religion; some crossed the valley of the Indus and settled near the Punjab, and became the founders of the Aryan nation. We find a graphic picture of the history of the Indo-Aryans, represented in the Rig-Veda. Though not historical in the strict sense of the word, yet it presents us with a very faithful picture of the lives of the people, while its noble language and lofty conceptions presuppose a high degree of mental and moral culture.

In dealing first with the religion of these Indo-Aryans, we should say, they have left us monumental records of their spiritual enlightenment in the grand theology of the Vedas. It is intersper-

sed with utterances pregnant with lofty conceptions of deep spirituality. Again looking at their social polity, we find therein a very united family-life. The father was the most prominent factor in the family. Women were honoured, and consulted in all matters of importance, and we find them holding discussions in philosophy and science, with academic professors. Marriage was regarded as a very binding sacrament; the woman was allotted the work of joint ruler of the house with her husband, and she helped him in the performance of religious ceremonies.

Industry and commerce also attained a very high degree of perfection in the Vedic Age; but generally speaking, the people appear to have settled down to a peaceful agricultural life, and gradually as civilization became more intricate in its growth, the four great castes emerged—priests, warriors, merchants and artisans.

Thus we find a civilization rich in ethical, philosophic, and literary culture, with a highly developed social polity, generally increasing, through the military caste, its martial prowess, and growing steadily in industrialism.

Skipping over the Vedic period we now come down to the time of 1400—1000 B. C. By this

time the whole of the Gangetic basin had become consolidated into an Hindu Empire, and the cultured Gangetic races, with their courts and schools of learning, with their great tournaments and feats of arms, and with their elaborate social rules and religious rites gave evidences of a high state of Hindu Civilization.

In course of time these states extended their boundaries, and colonised far and wide, until by the fourth century B. C. the whole of India, with Ceylon, was brought under the Hindu Civilization. In their relations with other peoples, the primitive races of India, the Hindus evinced an extraordinary synthetic capacity. They did not merely annex new territories, but also absorbed the conquered races into their own culture and customs, making them one with Hindu Civilization.

Many foreign travellers have left us records of their visit to India—which bespeak in all instances the high standard of refinement, the Hindu Society then attained in all its phases. As early as 401 B. C. Ktesias, the Greek physician and traveller had been greatly impressed by the extreme justness of the Hindus in all their dealings, their devotion to their sovereign, and their stoic coolness in death. Later, Megas-

thenes, a Greek ambassador in Bengal, gives us a detailed picture of the life around him. He emphasises particularly their scrupulous truthfulness, honesty, and their great valour. He lays stress upon the chastity of their women, and the sobriety, industry and skill of the farmers and artisans. Like Alexander, he has remarked, with glowing appreciation, on the character of the Brahmins, with their life dedicated to the ministration of humanity, and their demeanour exercising a great moral influence over the whole Hindu community.

Megasthenes has also left us a vivid account of the internal condition of the country. He speaks of its salubrious climate, and the natural fecundity of the soil enhanced by systematic irrigation. Plenty then reigned in the land, strewing flowers of prosperity in the path of the rich and the poor alike. Health, wealth, and knowledge, were bountiously bestowed by Heaven upon all. Commerce, Arts and Sciences, attained the zenith of perfection, and the Aryan's artistic skill in the design of art-manufactures is still manifest in the high standard of art-culture in India.

Megasthenes has also given us a picture of the constitution of Monarchical Government in India

at the time. His accounts of councillors and soldiers, are really worth perusal. India was then divided into many principalities some of which exercised paramount powers.

The invasion of India by Alexander the Great in 327 B. C., marks the culminating point in Greek influence, for though he was forced to give up all idea of conquest, he made alliances, planted Greek Colonies, and founded cities, introducing for the time being, at any rate, a stable Grecian element into the Hindu Civilization. The latter, however, proved the great solvent,—India assimilated the foreign culture, Hinduised the foreign Colonies, and herself remained inviolate.

Now we come to the time of the world-famed Hindu Emperor Asoka, 272 B. C. During the beginning of his reign, he annexed the Kingdom of Kalinga; but the lust of conquest brought, in its train, such a deep abhorance for warfare that he resolved never to countenance it again. He embraced Buddhism, and as a result published his famous Edicts which even stand to-day as monuments of moral culture in India.

He also appointed censors in each district to see that these edicts were in fact observed by the people. Strict supervision over every class of

society was enjoined, not excepting royalty even, and Asoka had the edicts graven upon rocks and tablets, in public places, by the way side, and in the desert, throughout the land, so that people, in whatever remote district, they might be, should profit by them.

The generous and heartfelt allegiance which the people gave to these edicts, is, but an example of the instant and spontaneous response given by the Hindu mind to a spiritual appeal.

Fa-Haien, a Chinese pilgrim visited India in the fifth century A. D., and found Asoka's palace at Patna then standing, and he could not bring himself to believe that such inspiring beauty, such delicate workmanship, such perfection of design, were the work of merely human hands and brains.

The whole history of India at this period, and for many centuries, reveals a wonderfully developed civilization, so ultra-modern in many of its social-political aspects, that we can build upon it our hopes of the future, without looking backwards into the ages, when our country was in the height of its Civilization and Europe overrun with barbaric hordes.

The Central Government retained the ultimate control of affairs in its own hands, while maintaining the constitutional liberties of its subjects. One dominant feature of Indian political life—the rule of the village communities—had stood out from the dawn of history, until it was unfortunately snubbed under British rule. Each village was self-governing through a headman and a council, and there was complete freedom in all internal affairs; the council controlled taxation, settled disputes, protected personal property, maintained individual rights, checked crime and preserved order. These village communities were little independent republics, which contributed much to the preservation of the people of India, through many a cycle of revolutions and metamorphoses, and were conducive to their happiness and to the enjoyment of a great portion of freedom and independence. But unluckily for us, the defiant bureaucracy in India, now sees bugbears in the prospect of giving us fiscal independence or any form of autonomy. That our forefathers had developed a standard of Self-government, long before the light of civilization illumined the Western nations, is a fact which no amount of sophistry would be able to

gainsay. Some of those turncoat Englishmen in England, who are never tired of crying anathemas to everything Indian, are too apt to regard it as an incisure which India has indiscriminatingly filched from Western culture, trying to graft it on an altogether exotic soil, whereas it is an imperishable thread running throughout the whole texture of Hindu polity from the earliest dawn of history.

We now come to the Sixth Century, A. D. resplendent with the fame of Vikramaditya of Ujain, the great hero of India. During his reign, the arts of peace flourished, science and literature obtained a fresh start, poetry and the drama lighted their magic lamp and shed a lustre over this Augustian period of Hindu history. Religion itself gathered strength and life, and Hinduism flourished under his fostering care.

The seventh century saw the reign of Siladitya II who ruled over the whole of the Gangetic basin, including Nepal, from the Himalayas to the Narbada. Civil administration in his reign attained a high state of perfection. The local rajahs were also given the right of administering justice. The people were free from the yoke of

cumbrous taxation and the officials received handsome salaries for their work.

Siladitya himself was a liberal patron of literature and kindred arts, and in later life, withdrew himself from material ambitions and imitated the religious asceticism of Asoka. During his reign, provisions for systematic irrigation were made all over the land. A Special Irrigation Department measured lands and regulated sluices to enable all to receive a proper share of water. Roads were also under State control. A Board of Trade regulated sales, and enforced the use of standard weights and measures. Merchants paid a license tax, and those who traded in more than one class of commodities paid double. There was also a Board of Manufactures, and a Municipal Board which superintended industrial arts. The Military Department was under the control of a War Office consisting of (1) Admiralty Board (2) Transport Commissariat and Army Service (3) Infantry (4) Cavalry (5) War Chariots (6) Elephants.

We find another striking characteristic of Indian civilization in the many trade guilds. These safeguarded the occupations of their workers,

upheld their interests in cases of disputes with other guilds, regulated working hours and wages, imposed fines and penalties on offending members, and, in fact, exercised strict supervision of the craftsmen in the interests of the whole community. The proper education of the young in their hereditary craft was secured, while adequate provision was made for needy and aged members. Every one was required, so long as he was able, to contribute his proper share of labour, of whatever kind it might be, so India had no need for either poor-law or work-house. Nor was this desirable condition attained through a too strenuous and prolonged labour. The village and civic life of India presents an enviable picture of social gatherings at the close of the day's work, sometimes for music and gaiety, more often for neighbourly chat and philosophic and religious discussion. It was a life of careful, loving work, of healthy, simple recreation, of few wants, of many blameless joys, with leisure to enjoy not only the society of friends, but that loving intercourse with Nature that awakens so deep a response in the Hindu heart.

Coming now to the ninth and tenth centuries A.D. we see how the Rajputs had by this time

grown up to be a chivalrous nation. They were the first to repel the earliest Moslem invaders, who had settled in Sind in the eighth century. The deeds of their bravery have gained for themselves world-wide and immortal renown.

The rise of the Rajputs, who were strong supporters of Hinduism, marks the decline of Buddhism, which from their time ceased to be a power in India. Skipping over the Hindu period, we will now rapidly pass over the Mahomedan invasion of India, deeply interesting, pulsating with vivid life, romantic, gorgeous, barbaric alike in splendour and in cruelty, elemental in its extremes of good and evil as it is, because though it furrowed and scarred the surface of India, it left the bed-rock of her essential life and heart untouched.

The Mahomedans made their progress very slowly and suffered continual checks. The armies of Islam had carried the crescent from the Hindu Kush westward, through Asia, Africa and Southern Europe to distant Spain and France, before they obtained a foot-hold in the Punjab. The delay was due, not only to the daring of individual tribes, such as the Sind Rajputs, but to the military organisation of the Hindu Kingdoms.

Three separate groups of princes governed the Vindhya and the great river valleys. The Rajputs ruled in the north-west, throughout the plains of the Indus and along the upper waters of the Jumna. The ancient Middle Land of Sanskrit times (Madhyadesha) was divided among powerful kingdoms, with their suzerain at Kanouj. The Lower Gangetic Valley, from Behar downwards, was still in part governed by Pal or Buddhist dynasties. The Vindhya ranges stretched their wall of forests and mountains between the northern and southern halves of India. Their eastern and central regions were peopled by fierce hill-tribes. At their western extremity, towards the Bombay Coast, lay the Hindu Kingdom of Maleva with its brilliant literary traditions of Vikramaditya and a vast feudal array of fighting men. India to the south of the Vindhya was occupied by a number of warlike princes, chiefly of non-Aryan descent, but loosely grouped under three over-lords, represented by the Chera, Chola and Pandya dynasties.

Such in fact, was the military organisation of India in A. D. 1000. The one way in which the Moslems could establish and maintain a foothold

in India was by taking advantage of the natural jealousies of the various kingdoms, making an ally of one powerful state, and with its aid conquering its rival. But the Hindu states were very powerful, and were never at any time completely subjugated. It is really interesting to note that the Hindu kingdoms of Carnata and Telingana were re-established about the middle of the fourteenth century. "The first, with its capital Bijanugger, attained to a pitch of power and splendour not perhaps surpassed by any previous Hindu dynasty"; and such was the mutual estimation between the Hindu and Mahomedan sovereigns of the Deccan, that intermarriages took place between them, Hindus were in high command in the Mahomedan army, and Mahomedans in the Hindu, and a Rajah of Bijanugger built a mosque for his Mahomedan subjects.

The supremacy of Mahomedan rule reached its culmination in the reign of Akbar the Great, (1556 —1605) who consolidated his empire by a wise conciliation of the Hindu princes, and thus, through diplomacy, brought them into political dependence.

He conferred the highest political and martial appointments upon Hindus, and made alliance

with them in marriage, by securing to them a sufficiency of careers which should satisfy their ambitions and absorb their energies, and was thereby able to push his conquests further towards Northern India. His efforts to bring under subjugation Southern India ended in smoke and he was therefore forced to retire.

The secret of Akbar's success lay in appreciating what was good and noble in all races and in all religions, and his magnanimity in granting constitutional security of equal political rights to all his subjects.

Selim, his favourite son and successor was weak and self-indulgent, so he could add nothing to the stability of the empire ; but Akbar's generous traditions were continued during the earlier and best years of Shah Jehan's reign, but its foundations were loosened and the way to its final fall prepared by Aurangzeb, who by his despotic policy, his acts of bigotry and oppression, alienated the Hindu princes and peoples, who now began to re-unite in order to bring about the overthrow of the Moslem empire.

When Aurangzeb died in 1707, the Rajputs and the Sikhs began threatening the Mahomedan

power in the south and north west, while the Maharattas levied *chout* over the whole of the Decan. The Mahomedan rule had become weakened and this accelerated the advance of the English power at the beginning of the nineteenth century.

Their supremacy though modified, and their triumph comparatively short-lived, yet the Moghuls left a brilliant record behind them. They never tried to undermine existing conditions, but wisely raised a superb \superstructure on the foundation laid by the genius of Mahomedan rulers on the ruins of Hindu civilization. They owned the conquered territory as their own land, and tried to fuse everything into their own nationality.

As the Hindus themselves made possible the Mahomedan conquests, so through their own administration in the offices of state they maintained the Mahomedan suzerainty. The emperors were careful to foster the external and internal well-being of the country. They spent vast sums of money on public works of utility, while at the same time they were enthusiastic patrons of arts and sciences.

The mutual toleration of both parties permitted the new faith to establish itself and develop

side by side with Hinduism. The Mahomedan conquest introduced a new feature in India, and the mosques became in Hindustan, as in other countries of Islam, centres of instruction and of literary activity. When the East India Company was finally established, it had to rule over a people who were given to instruction and respected learning. It found four methods of education at work. (1) The teaching given by Brahmins to their disciples. (2) The *tols* or Seats of Sanskrit learning. (3) The *Mukhtabs* and *Madradas* or Schools and Colleges of the Mahomedans and (4) The Village Schools.

The details of the English conquest are too well-known to require recapitulation. Circumstances favoured the advent of the English. The Mahomedan power was on its wane, and though the Hindus were slowly scaling the ladder of ascendancy, they were not powerful enough to show a bold front to the English nation, disciplined as they were on the modern tactics of war. Their diplomatic treaties and their alliances combined with the aid of the Indian people, paved the way for the establishment of the English rule in India. Though England has, since her occupation of India, given

us Western education, yet she has always tried to emasculate our Nationality by enforcing upon us a system of religion and morals detrimental to the growth of a nation, and so the gradual atrophy and paralysis of all its higher and most virile qualities is the inevitable result.

The advocates of improvement do not seem to have perceived the great springs on which it depends. They do not place any confidence in the natives—nay they look down upon them as so many “untouchables”; but they are ardent in their zeal for enlightening them by the general diffusion of knowledge! No conceit wilder and more absurd than this was ever engendered in the darkest ages, for what could prove the great stimulus to the pursuit of knowledge, but the prospect of fame, or wealth or power? We are debarred from having any entrance into the so-called holy precincts of their administration. We have been made to work something like the marionettes, dancing to the movements of an alien agency. It is this moral degradation to which India is thus exposed under the Imperial Government and this forms the Nationalists’ chief complaint. Until we, as a nation, are purged from the impurities

consequent upon such demoralisation, all our healthy growth must become impossible. A nation of obedient automatons, directing the administrative machinery, would still be subject to this demoralisation however technically perfect that administration might be.

“ Nation grown corrupt

Love bondage more than liberty—

Bondage with ease than strenuous liberty.”

Milton.

But happily for us, a sense of national consciousness, has of late, begun bestirring our men ; and we believe it is through the Federal ideal that India will accomplish her great mission and take her honoured place in the comity of nations.

CHAPTER III.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF NATIONALISM.

Apart from the Historical sketches of the Aryan nation some thousand years back, that we have narrated in the previous chapter, in order to bring home to the mind of Young India, the vastness of her past, the greatness of her civilization, the grandeur and nobility of her traditions, the vigorous independence of her ancient peoples, preserving through all vicissitudes their own laws and customs, we desire to give a brief outline of the scientific, philosophic, religious and literary attainments of the Aryan nation in the dim past.

What glorious monuments of human culture they raised in India, is indeed a prodigy of marvel to contemplate. Aryan wisdom shone resplendent, and from its eminence dazzled the eyes of distant nations—distant geographically and chronologically—illumined every corner of the intellectual horizon and served as a beacon, lighting the paths of erring travellers.

In so literary a nation, it may well be understood that philology was deemed to be of utmost importance. In the rhythmical chanting of the Hindu scriptures, the correct intonation based on Phonetics was absolutely necessary. Sound was therefore believed to possess a vital potency in itself ; hence the correctness of sounds in words and phrases had to be grasped, and this again necessitated a thorough insight into their origin and unison and thus a very systematic and elaborate science of grammar was built up. Panini's grammar is therefore still looked upon as the most wonderful feat of human genius.

In Mathematics, and in the science of Medicine they were equally great (See R. C. Dutt's *Ancient India*) Hindu Medical science reached its zenith during the Buddhist era—250 B. C.—A. D. 750. In the succeeding revival of Hinduism, the Brahmins, who up to this time had been its chief exponents, began for ceremonial reasons to dissociate themselves from the profession, relegating it to the lower castes ; and a period of degeneration set in.

It would be impossible to omit, in an account however cursory, of Indian life and characteristics.

some mention of so integral a part of the national life as Indian Art. The history of art covers more than two thousand years, but its principles were first formulated by the art academies attached to the ancient universities of Northern India.

These inaugurated a period of remarkable art-revival and development, lasting for some centuries and exerting a wholesome influence throughout India. Our ideal of art is entirely different from that of the English nation's. The predominant feature of our art is to symbolise some aspect of the spiritual nature of man, subordinating it to the needs of human being, whereas the English art invariably dabbles with the superficialities of an object ignoring its inner potentialities.

The architectural achievements of the Hindus have always evoked universal wonder and admiration. Successive periods, differing races, developed various forms, but all preserve in their temples, a grandeur of conception, a perfection of proportion, a profusion of design, an exquisite delicacy of workmanship—blending the whole into a sublime symphony, the solemn majesty of which can never be matched even by the finest product of Western civilization.

All the arts and sciences of India are synthesised in her philosophy, which in its religious aspect regards all activities as means and aids in the perception of the true nature of man, which it is the object of all true philosophy to elucidate.

But unhappily for us, the omnific fiat of the British Government has disorganized our trade guilds, under whose protection, purity of work, and excellence of standard were maintained. The consequent laxity of communistic ties, combined with chill penury staring at the face, has helped to force the spirit of modern individualism upon the reluctant craftsmen, who being stripped of all maintenance is compelled to produce inferior work in order to keep intact his body and soul together.

We now pass on to the consideration of India's philosophical attainments. It was really a grand Era of philosophy when our six schools developed their respective systems of thought. Never before in the history of the world were such flights of human genius seen to evolve so grand a system of philosophic culture. Though the doctrines of these Schools, are far removed like the poles, yet one Ideal of thought, like a golden thread, runs through the vast field of philosophic

thought in India. The one object of these Schools is to point out the way to the apotheosis of the human soul and its ultimate salvation. Our sages saw this world with all its evanescent phenomena as full of misery and sorrow,—man trying to combat with Nature, to rid himself from the trammels of worldly wretchedness. Our triumph in this struggle lies in our subordinating Nature with the aid of *Jnana i. e., Gnosis*. Just as Fire consumes everything, so *Jnana* consumes all our desires and propensities. Quite different is the object of European Schools of thought. The central object of their philosophy is to gain victory over Nature with the aid of Nature. Their wireless telegraphy, their motor-cars, their air-ships are tangible proofs of their triumph over Nature. Social polity, Political Economy, Natural Science, are all woven together into the texture of their philosophy,—hence they have materially advanced in the scale of civilization, at the expense of spiritual enlightenment.

In considering our six Schools of philosophy, we should first of all deal with the Vaisheshika system. The Hindu Vaisheshika system of philosophy holds that the whole Universe and all material substances are aggregates of atoms: the atoms

are imperishable, but the aggregates perish by disintegration. Ages before Western Science dreamt of the Atomic theory, our sages had elaborated a most wonderful philosophy on the subject. Our Vedanta and Sankhya stand as corner-stones of Hindu thought. The conclusions of the most profound modern thinkers—Berkley, Hume, Hartman, Hegel,—are all anticipated and subjected to minute analysis in the Sankhya philosophy, while the deep spiritual flights of the Vedanta have never been surpassed.

The key-note of our Vedanta is its doctrine of Oneness. One reigns everywhere,—in the ripplings of the waters of the ocean,—in the melody of the nightingale,—in the sweet effulgence of the moon,—and in the charming beauty of blooming flowers. This One is the Self. There is nothing real but this Self. The distinction of subject and object is only conventional—*Vyavaharika*, as Sankara calls it—and the result of partial knowledge—*Ajnana*—which melts away like mists before the rising sun of Knowledge. Our ideas of space and time, as objects of our cognition are comprehended in the knowing self and cannot be out of it. What a monumental edifice of

spiritual culture Sankara raised in India, has been a subject of wonder to all other nations. His penetrating genius combined with a higher standard of spiritual refinement, made Religion a veritable moving force in India.

Our Sankhya also harps upon the theme of how to gain victory over worldly wretchedness. This world is full of misery. Everywhere, we hear a wail of misery—making human life an eternal bed of thorns. *Jnana* cuts at the root of all these miseries. Kapila then goes on to give a classification of worldly misery. He further interrogates on the qualified clause of knowledge. This knowledge consists in our separating *Purusha* from *Prakriti*. So long as we look upon *Purusha* and *Prakriti* as one, all worldly miseries beset us everywhere. According to *Kapila* our Self or *Purusha* is totally different from *Prakriti*. This Self is ever aloof from the functions of *Prakriti*. The creation of categories and finer bodies proceed from *Prakriti*. As soon as we merge this Self or *Purusha* into the vortex of *Prakriti*, worldly wretchedness overpowers us. Our liberation or perfection lies in that knowledge of ours which

never allows the Self or *Purusha* to be entangled into the meshes of *Prakriti*.

In our observations of the Hindu system of Logic by *Gautama*, we should like to say, that never in the history of philosophy was such keen ratiocination displayed by any human genius. Western Logic with all its deductive or inductive methods dwindles into insignificance before the lofty flights of *Gautama*'s reasonings. The central doctrine of the Hindu system of Logic is based on the idea of liberation of the human soul from worldly depravity. Whence come these miseries and sorrows is the question of questions asked by *Gautama*. He then goes to argue rationally—deducing inferences from premises. With the aid of Knowledge, we can conquer the demon of misery. *Gautama* then asks of what does this knowledge consist? In explanation of this he has given an enumeration of sixteen *Padarthas*. In his attempt at elaborating these *Padarthas* lies the grandeur of his whole philosophy. Our emancipation from the thralldom of worldly iniquities lies in our knowledge of these sixteen *Padarthas*.

Briefly touching the points of Patanjali and the *Mimamsa* philosophies, we should say, that the

same idea of the salvation of human beings, illumines like a grand light their respective systems of thought. Patanjali elucidates the grand thesis of spiritual concentration by Knowledge. Yoga helps us in the attainment of liberation from the bondage of iniquities. Until one has attained a complete purification in the furnace of that psychological exercise which makes men free from all desires, either mundane, or supramundane, one cannot gain salvation. In order to become a true *Sannyasi*, one must entirely annihilate the filthy sheath of *Ahum Mamaty*, i. e., the egotistic sense of I and Mine which envelops the Ego. Asceticism is nothing but an accomplishment of the undertaking underlying the stratum of the knowledge of self. Patanjali then gives an enumeration of the various modes of this psychological exercise by which we can extricate ourselves from the meshes of worldly wretchedness. Jaimini in his *Mimamsa* philosophy, lays stress on the utility of work. He says, work is the moral and material force for the performance of the journey of life. The constant proclivity of human passions is the great barrier towards the attainment of salvation, hence the necessity of work to enable us to curb our passions. He then enumerates the various formulæ

towards the performance of sacrifices and other rituals.

It is really astounding that such grand systems of philosophic culture should have been elaborated thousands of years ago by the intrepid thinkers of India. The blissful communion with the *Brāhmah* in which they lived, accounts for the superior enlightenment of the Aryan nation. They endeavoured first to illumine the inner temple of their body—which as a natural sequel let them see things in their true light. Our sages have always tried to show that there can be nothing phenomenal without something that is real, and that goodness and virtue, faith and work, are necessary as a preparation,—nay as a *sine qua non* for the attainment of that higher knowledge which brings about the salvation of the human soul.

In our march through the vast field of Nationalism, it would be worth our while to take note of the religious consciousness of India, which has always helped to keep alive Hinduism through centuries of misrule and oppression. The greatest theme of India in all ages has been religion. It is the propelling power that guides and controls India. It is the Pillar of Fire that illumines our

path, like that of the Isralites of old, in our march through the dark wilderness of misery.

Hinduism has always recognised that Truth is one and infinite, but human apprehension of it, being finite, must necessarily take many forms, and that human beings according to their character and stage of development, assimilated one or other aspect of that truth,—colouring their conception of the whole, hence the various cults within the pale of pure Monism.

From the vantage ground of Monism, man in his inner nature is not simply a “child of God,” but he is god himself, and it is sheer ignorance that hinders him from grasping this truth. The ideal of Hindu religion is to so regulate the life of the individual, of Society, of the State, that all activities, whether pertaining to the physical, social or mental life, should help towards the evolution of the whole man. We get the whole through the grand amalgam of the parts. We blend “sacred and secular” into a sweet religious harmony. The jarring elements of “secular” are merged into Religion itself.

The idea of *Dharma* in Hinduism is quite different from the Western idea of Religion. *Dharma*

regulates the evolution of the entire man. *Dharma* includes Duty, Law, Righteousness, Destiny, etc. It is the law of self-unfoldment,—embodying the stage of development reached by any particular ego towards the realisation of Truth. *Dharma* is the soldering material of Hinduism. The fabric will not stand without it.

Interwoven with *Dharma* is the doctrine of Karma and Re-incarnation. The former is nothing but an enunciation of the law of causation, the teaching that “whatever a man soweth, that shall he surely reap.” In humanity, it applies both to the man and the nation, making individual and collective karma.

The doctrine of Re-incarnation, in Hinduism, completes the Western theory of evolution, by presupposing a corresponding evolution of the soul through the law of Karma. The spiritual or mental enlightenment of a nation depends upon the birth of good souls purified by the law of karma. We have deviated far away from the path of virtue and truth, hence the dearth of the birth of good souls among us. If we are to come out of the gloomy regions of ir-religion, we should so train our children that they may reap a good harvest by their actions.

Nationalism in India is essentially a spiritual awakening. The former is but the natural outcome of the latter. Hinduism has always tried to bring about a harmony between thought and action, between the inner conception and the outer life. Nationalism is the legitimate, the imperative demand of India to fulfil her own *Dharma* in all the departments and activities of life.

That India should in time aspire to and accomplish national freedom and independence, backed by the moral support of the nation, was recognised in the days of the East India Company, and the justice of the claim was fully acknowledged. In those earlier days, there was a deep conviction that the fame of an empire rests upon the solid basis of national integrity ; that in no wise could England so forget her high principles, so soil her honour, as deliberately to withhold from India, for the purposes of keeping her under subjection, those rights, those liberties, which England herself deems essential to all healthy development. In 1833 Lord Ellenborough had declared that "our very existence depended upon the exclusion of the natives from military and political power." Macaulay replied in his famous speech before the House of

There is certainly nothing amazing in the demand of the present day. Freedom helps towards the growth of a nation. A tree reared in a hot-house is always stunted in growth. India was great when she was nationally free. In China, in Persia, and Afghanistan, the rulers, "the oriental despots" have understood the spirit of the times and conciliated it in a bold and statesman-like manner. Three great Oriental Rulers have readily given up their cherished notions of autocracy and parted with some of their powers and privileges. But what is the case in India? Here the bureaucracy, which is in immediate power, is as blind as ever. It cannot see, it will not see, even when it has eyes to see.

We have already seen how India was really great in all her spheres of enlightenment. Our idea of Nationalism has for its basis the greatness of India's past. It is the perfection of humanity through the advancement of India's social and civic constitutions. The human personality with an end unto itself, had but scanty recognition in the social economy of the ancients,—outside India. In India alone, among the Hindus, the human individuality received the fullest recognition.

In the Hindu economy alone was the right of the individual to be a law unto himself, fully recognised. It was, however, the individual perfected through a long and laborious course of social discipline, and thus trained to identify himself with the universal, who attained this right. Thus, we see in the first two orders of the *Brahmacharin* and the *Grihastha*, that subjection to authority was the paramount rule, while in the last two orders of the *Vanprastha* and the *Sannyasin*, the individual at first partially and then completely gave himself up to the higher and the contemplative life, and was therefore freed from the conflicts of selfish passions and from interests in the ordinary social duties and activities. Freedom was therefore the law. In *Sannyasa* the individual was a law unto himself. And it was so, because he was at least supposed in that stage to have really ceased to be an individual, that is an individual with private and personal ends and desires, completely identifying himself with the Universal. This identification with the Universal has always been the highest conception of freedom in India, among the Hindus. It was the peculiar fruit of the Hindu race-consciousness which has had from prehistoric times an overwhelming

sense of the spiritual and the Universal, as an original and organic element of its intellectual and moral life.

We have already remarked that the individual with an end unto himself, received but scanty recognition outside India. The individual was looked upon as a part, society was the whole, the individual was a limb, society was the body: the individual was an organ, society was an organism. The whole must regulate its parts; the body must control the limbs, the organism must rule the organs to its own needs,—this was the old social philosophy. This was the old pagan view in Greece and Rome.

In the Western world Christianity first raised a formal protest against it. But Christianity with all its moral force failed to free the individual from the old social bondage. It only substituted a new social whole, more comprehensive and cosmopolitan than the old ones. The new Church was substituted for the old social authority, but the subjection of the individual practically continued. The Church was the whole, the members were the parts: the Church was the body, the members were the limbs. Thus the old

subjection continued, but the authority that controlled the individual was transferred from Pagan Society to the Christian Church.

But even this transference of authority, due to the personal election of the individual, was a distinct advance towards personal freedom. It conferred upon the individual the right of choosing, though perhaps not of actually making, the laws that shall govern him. Even this choice was a great thing. It was a first step towards personal freedom. In making proselytes from pagan religions, Christianity, started with a recognition of that right of private judgment, upon which the subsequent Lutheran protest was based. The right of private judgment was fully recognised in the acceptance of Christianity by every convert. The Lutheran protest, therefore, did not discover a new principle, but simply expanded somewhat the field of the application of an old principle. The authority of the individual was valid and absolute in his preferring Christianity to Paganism. It was valid and absolute in his first act of choosing, but it ceased with that first act. That was Catholicism. Luther denied that this right ceased with that first act of choice.

He claimed that individual reason, conscience, must have the right of deciding what is true and what is false in the traditional interpretations of the Christian Scriptures and the Christian dogmas.

This is the logic of all missionary religions. This is the essential implication of all credal systems, erroneously called universal in contradistinction from national and ethnic systems. There is no need or room for the exercise of personal choice in ethnic religions. Every man belonging to an ethnic religion is born to it. But missionary religions are different. Acceptance of a creed is the soul of missionary religions. All missionary religions appear before the bar of individual reason and conscience, pleading for acceptance. It is an appeal to individual reason and conscience. And the logic of this appeal is the recognition of the right of private judgment.

Luther failed to grasp the true import of individualism. Christianity repudiated the right of the whole to control the parts. It did not set up the individual as law unto himself. It only freed the individual from the authority of that which had really ceased to be his larger and higher self, and set him in conscious relation with something

which he was able to accept as his own larger and higher self.

The true liberty of the individual has come with the new gospel of Nationalism. And in Europe, Mazzini was its first apostle and prophet. The movement of individual freedom in Europe, originating with the protest of Luther, found its culmination in the gospel of Mazzini. Though the protestant right of private judgment, was really subjective individualism, yet inasmuch as it accepted the dogma of an objective and supernatural scripture, practically this freedom of the individual was circumscribed by the traditions of his religion. Individual reason had to exercise its freedom of judgment within the limitations of the Scriptures. The conscience of the individual had to submit to the accepted moral code of the sacred book. Protestant freedom worked within these limits. Mazzini, however, threw these old brakes away, and proclaimed a new gospel of freedom in which the individual really became a law unto himself. Hindu thought had of old recognised the right of the individual to be a law unto himself, but only under certain conditions, when the individual had purged himself of the conceit of his

individuality and had realised thereby his essential identity with the Universal. The gospel of freedom preached by Mazzini was of a different kind. The freedom here proclaimed was an absolute right. It was an unconditional claim. The human unit was entitled to this freedom whatever might be the stage of intellectual or moral evolution in which it stood. The gospel of Mazzini ushered in a new era of human progress. It proclaimed the law of right against the old authority of status. It meant new thought, new ideals, new aspirations, a new out-look, and a new life for the modern world.

Nationalism in India to-day is the sweet harmony between the new Ideal of Mazzini and the old Ideal of Sannyasa. Perfection of humanity is our goal. Nationalism is the message of truth through which we seek this perfection. This perfection must be preceded by the moral culture of the Nation; otherwise every progress, mental, or spiritual, would become stagnant. In harmony is progress; and we desire to harmonise everything towards the fulfilment of our ideal.



Late Babu Raj Narain Bose.

CHAPTER IV.

ANCESTRY AND EARLY YEARS OF ARAVINDA.

THE force of heredity as one of the most important factors in the constitution of human character, can never be ignored. A man's bright ancestry is often the keystone on which the excellency of his nature rests. Just as from the sparkling particles of gold dust, here and there scattered along the bed of a river, we can trace up its current, to the heap of this precious substance lying at its source, so tracing back the current of a man's bright existence, till we reach the loins from which he took his birth, we are struck with the manly qualities of his ancestors. A father's proclivities are often seen in a son, and a grandfather's in a grandson. And as a practical illustration of this, we refer to the case of Aravinda Ghose. We have all seen of what stuff he is made; and if we go back a few years and look into the nature of the soil whence he grew, we shall be forced to admit that his ancestry had a great deal to do in fostering and developing the

germs of excellence with which he was born. His maternal grandfather late Babu Raj Narain Bose was styled as the "Grandfather of Indian Nationalism," and where is the wonder that the grandson should possess his spirit? The educated, liberal, patriotic, and loyal Hindu, cast his mantle of inspiration on his daughter's son, and he rushed out with the sabre of truth to remove from his way everything that threatened the liberty and birth-right of his country, till every nook and corner of India echoed and re-echoed "India for Indians". Like sentiments had stirred the heart of Raj Narain, and must have been imbibed by Aravinda with the sustenance he drew from his mother's breast. And we propose here to give the reader an insight into the life and doings of our hero's grand-father, as we believe it would also give a panoramic view of the state of Hindu society at a time when English education was just beginning to capture the minds of young Bengal.

Raj Narain Bose was born on the 7th of September 1826, at a village named Boral, in the 24-Pergunnas, and at the distance of twelve miles from Calcutta. The original home of his

ancestors was at Govindapur where Fort William now stands. The East Indian Company took their land, giving in exchange a plot of ground at Bahir Simla in Calcutta. The Bose family lived here for a generation or two, when Shukdeb, Raj Narain's great grand-father removed to Boral. A remarkable incident is said to have happened in Shukdeb's life which has made him and his village memorable in Bengal. The man was once very ill with jaundice, and his life hang on a thread. All treatment available having proved ineffectual, he started for Baidnath to lie prostrate before the god Shiva, with supplications for recovery. He had not to go so far as Baidnath, as while on the way he was told in a dream to try a certain remedy for his disease. He adopted the remedy, and returned home quite healthy and strong. Raj Narain testifies that subsequently this medicine cured thousands and thousands, and the rewards the Boses received for the cures effected formed a good part of their income.

Sukhdeba had two sons, Ramprosad and Ramsoonder. The former entered the Company's service as Dewan to the Collector of Customs at

Dacca, while the latter remained at home to look after the joint-family and its interests. We regard Aravinda and Raj Narain as philanthropists, but here it should be mentioned that their philanthropy is but the reflex of that of the latter's grandfather and grandfather's brother. It is said that Ramprosad gave away the greater part of his income as alms. The Brahmins of Boral were not only sumptuously fed from time to time, but were presented with gold and rich clothes. Relations of all kinds—even those very distant in consanguinity were permanent every-day guests. But there was a remarkable circumstance in the constitution of the family itself. The ladies of the house rich enough to be served by cooks, cooked themselves: they ate the simplest food possible; and fond as women are of ornaments, they had never the vanity of adorning their persons.

Rajnarain's grandfather, Ramsoonder was as generous as his elder brother Ramprosad. It was his custom every morning to visit his neighbours—in fact all the inhabitants of his village, and inquire if they were in any kind of want, and to supply it whenever necessary. He helped the

villagers with personal labour on their behalf. If the master of a house was away from home, and if he projected the excavation of a tank, the laying out of a garden, or the building of a house, Ramsoonder filled the man's place, and superintended in the midday sun the labourers' work. He was good to all, and served them at great sacrifice.

Ramsoonder had two wives, the elder of whom gave birth to Madhusudan, and the younger to Nundo Kissore and Harihur. The former was Raj Narain's father. He was born in 1802, and his brother in 1804. They were both Brahmos of Rammohun Ray's school, and soon got up a party in their village to follow the same religious principles as they cherished dear to their hearts.

Nundokissore was educated in an English school established by Raja Rammohun Ray, and situated at the north east corner of the tank Huddua in Cornwallis Street. On leaving school, he became the private Secretary of the Raja and was enlisted as one of his disciples. That the preceptor exercised a great influence on the disciple, is evident from the following fact narrated in Raj Narain's Autobiography in which he says,

“My maternal grandfather had played a nasty trick with my father, before his marriage. Another girl more attractive than the intended bride had been shown, and thus my father had been made a dupe. He smarted under this trick, and to punish his father-in-law intended taking a second wife. Rammohun Ray came to learn this and having him called to him, thus spoke. ‘Nundokissore, a tree is to be judged by its fruit. If your wife bear a good son, reckon her as a good wife, no matter how deficient she may be in personal beauty.’ The Raja’s advice was followed, and my mother once despised of her husband was henceforth regarded by him with love and esteem.”

Nundokissore was for sometime a clerk in the *Hurkura* office. The *Hurkura* was a Weekly published in Calcutta. It has now no separate existence, having been long incorporated with the “Indian Daily News.” Nundokissore left the office, and at the age of 21 was appointed to a respectable post in the Opium Agency Office at Gazipur. He worked here so well as to attract the especial notice of his master Mr. John Trotten, the Opium Agent. But soon he fell ill, and was

compelled to return home. The last appointment he held was the Head Clerkship of the " Special Commission Office", established by Government to revise and curtail the list of *Debutter* and *Brohmotter* lands. Death then cut short his life at the premature age of 43.

Nundokissore was very upright. At his time extra earnings in the shape of bribes were not regarded as very sinful, and he could have amassed a large fortune had he been open to corruption. But he was above all that. He moved in the highest circles in Calcutta, and everybody coming into contact with him, could not help being charmed by his honesty and love for truth. In religion, he was a *Vedantist*. A few minutes before death, he had the religious book called *Sankara Vashya* read to him, and he repeated the sound Om, till his last moment. He was no idolater; but he did not cut off his connection with popular Hinduism, the chief tenet that guided him being that whatever may be a man's convictions, he must not offend his neighbours by deviating from the popular path. He performed his daily devotions as an Orthodox Hindu, and wore round his neck the sacred *Tulshimalla*,

except before the presence of Raja Rammohun Ray who was not compromising enough with such Hindu observances. His conduct may be censured by some modern Brahmos, as hypocritical and time-serving; but we should ask them to make some allowance for the circumstances by which he was surrounded. Brahmoism was at the time at the bud of its existence. There was not a Keshub to lay the axe at the root of idolatry, and whatever spiritual progress Nundokissore made, was fully in accordance with the light he had received, and the opportunities vouchsafed unto him. Contemporaneous institutions and customs rule to a great extent the movements of the soul. Impressions received in youth are apt to retain their influence in grown-up age; and if we find fault with Nundokissor's desire to observe some of the rites and ceremonies of his idol worshipping countrymen, we may with equal justice hold up the finger of remonstrance at the great Socrates's remark on his death-bed "Crito, I owe a cock to Aesculapius."

Nundo Kissore left an only son, whose name was Raj Narain. His early education was in keeping with the times. He learnt by rote some

of the slokas (verses) of *Chanukya*, read the *Mahabharat* and *Ramayana*; and sitting on the knees of his uncle Modhusudan, he was made to repeat God *Iswara*, Lord *Iswara*, etc. His father took him into an English School or an apology for one—kept by one named Shambhu master. The school assembled in a small dirty and dingy room at Bowbazar, and the number of pupils was very small. Shambhu Master taught the boys in the evening, while the tutorial chair was occupied by one Mr. Griff in the morning. Both the teachers were equally unfit for their work, and if any comparison between them could be possible, the palm was due to Shambhu. Their mastery of the English language can be guessed from the word they often used. It was the word *frule* which was invariably on their lips when holding out the threat of corporal punishment. The boys and their guardians consulted dictionaries for its meaning long in vain, till one of the latter at last found it out to be Griff's corruption of "ferule."

Having wasted sometime in this shabby School, Raj Narain got admittance into David Hare's School, then called "School Society's School." Here his mind found a healthy exer-

cise. The training he received drew out his faculties, and under the care of David Hare and the masters of the school, they were so developed as to promise a rich harvest in future. When about 14 years, he read before the School Debating Club a beautiful paper in English, the subject being, "Whether Science is preferable to Literature." Hare and his colleagues were charmed with this juvenile production, and unreservedly gave the essayist the praise due to him. A short time after this, Raj Narain edited an English periodical under the name of the Club Magazine. It was in every respect a perfect newspaper. The Muse of poetry too found a worshipper in him, and the first tribute he paid her was his satire directed against some of his classmates, especially one belonging to the Subornavanick class.

From Hare School, Raj Narain went to the Hindu College. He was admitted into the third class of the College, or the first class of the School Department. This was the class next to that eligible for the Senior Scholarship Examination. In time, he passed this examination, and attained a monthly scholarship of Rs. 30 tenable for two

years. He passed through the required time, and then got a higher scholarship. This he held for two years, and then left the College.

It was the custom in those days, to publish in Newspapers the answers given by the most advanced students of the College; and on one or two occasions Raj Narain's papers in English Literature, History and Moral Science, were published, and he got a medal in the last subject. His answers to the History paper were commented on, in the Bengal Herald published by William Kaye (afterwards Sir William Kaye) author of the Afgan War and the Indian Mutiny; and we quote *verbatim* the editor's remarks with the hope that the reader will be interested in their perusal. 'The distribution of scholarships and prizes to the students of the Hindu College took place on Thursday last. Our readers will have found the abstract of this interesting ceremony in our last. The *Harkara* has published them *in extenso*, including the best essay which was read by its author and the best answers to the historical questions for the Senior Scholarship. The essay compared with the Hindu College prize essays of several years past printed in the report,

is very inferior ; but the answers to the historical questions are astonishing for their fulness and general accuracy. They present too in their style a most remarkable contrast to the essay which is often not idiomatic, while that of the answers is scarcely often otherwise. We have been told that it is the practice with competitors for the scholarship to write their answers at first in rough draft and then copy them. Now if this was done in the case of the answers to which we are referring, the student who is the author of them must besides a most extraordinary memory, and faculty of expression in English, write it with a rapidity which is rare, even among Englishmen, for these answers occupy two columns of the "*Harkara*," very closely printed in brevier type. We write tolerably fast, but we doubt if we could write the quantity in the same time ; and we are quite sure that we could not write so much twice over, without allowing a moment for thought and recollection. If Raj Narain Bose wrote his answers at once, he cannot have taken any time to recall all the historical facts embodied in his answers, but have written them off as if writing from a book, and not from memory, and his performance, despite some slight mistakes in matter

and style, is really most extraordinary. He has not passed over a single question. He has answered every one in the most detailed manner, generally with great accuracy, and interspersed his answers with remarks that show considerable powers of reflection and discrimination. How comes it that he could not beat the essayist at the work, for the subject of the essay afforded great advantage to one, whose mind is so well stored with historical facts, and who writes with such extraordinary ease and rapidity? The subject given was 'On the effects produced on the fortunes of different nations and of mankind in general by the individual character of remarkable persons illustrated in History.' The author of the answers of the historical questions should surely have been able to write a better essay than the one to which the palm of superiority in business has been awarded." *Bengal Herald* 14th January 1834.

Raj Narain was very fortunate in having Captain Richardson as his guide in the rugged and rough domains of learning. The Captain was a giant in English Literature. Nobody has ever been equal to him in the reading and explanation of Shakespear's works. Richardson's successor

Mr. James Kerr too was a very learned man. He was thorough in every subject, and Raj Narain in his Autobiography in Bengali, writes thus of him. "Though not possessing the commanding person of Captain Richardson, Mr. Kerr was a man of deep learning. Richardson's powers as professor of English Literature were extraordinary; but Mr. Kerr was master of every subject taught in the Hindu College. His lectures on Moral Philosophy were very sublime, though not so captivating as those of Richardson. We never could make out what his religious views were. One day we were surprised to hear him advocating the cause of Idolatry as prevalent in our country."

Most of Raj Narain's fellow-students are well-known. Some of them have left behind names to be ever remembered. These were Michael Modhu .Suddan Dutt, the Indian Milton, Peari Chand Sircar, Jnanendra Mohun Tagore, Bhudeb Mukherjee, Jogesh Chandra Ghose, Anundo Krishna Bose, Iswar Chandra Mitra, Nilmadhab Mukherjee, Girish Chandra Deb, and Gobinda Chandra Dutt.

Raj Narain was no book-worm. During his College life even, he diverted his mind in different

ways, such as helping the famous English writer Kisor Chand Mittra in writing the memoirs of Raja Ram Mohon Ray, visiting Rajmahal and Gour in the company of Ram Gopal Ghose, and entering into religious disquisitions, often attended with changes in his views. The description of his journey, and of the religious unrest to which his mind was subject, not only throws much light on the Bengali Society at the time, but unfolds many a noble trait in his character. Captain Richardson and one or two other Englishmen, with whom Raj Narain mixed, were rather free-thinkers in religion, and the tender mind of the youth that learnt at their feet, was much affected by the examples of those pioneers of English Education in Bengal. We here think it best to translate freely what Raj Narain, in his "Autobiography" in Bengali, says of his tour through Gour, of the state of his mind in religious matters, and of the habits he imbibed when about to leave College, as well educated as it was then possible for Young Bengal to be.

"During the latter part of my College life," says Raj Narain, "I became acquainted with the well-known Ram Gopal Ghose whose house was

the favourite resort of all English educated young men of Bengal, and who was called *Edu-raj*, The Prince of the Educated. During the Puja holidays that year (1843) he proposed to visit Rajmahal and the ruins of ancient Gour. His own steam launch was chosen for the voyage; and the famous Sanskrit Professor, Madanmohan Tarkalankar, and two or three others, including myself, were invited to accompany him. A distant journey was not a light matter then. Now Bengalis are seen visiting distant places, crossing oceans and rivers in their voyage, but if anybody could then go to Landour or Mussouri, people would regard him as a hero. Late Ram Gopal Ghose, once went so far as these places; and so, our appreciation of his manly courage was too great to be expressed in words. He was at the time, the leader of educated Bengalis. They regularly assembled in his house, and cultivated English speaking, by carrying on in the language conversations on matters of education. His proposal to undertake the voyage in his steam launch *Lotus* was supposed to be a dangerous one, for no Bengali had ever before heard of the possibility and safety of choosing a vehicle of the kind. My mother should never have allowed me to run so

great a risk, and so I, in conjunction with my father, thought of keeping our project secret. We agreed to give out at first that I was going to Baghati, Ram Gopal's native village, and that my father would in time break to my mother the real fact. Oh! how buoyed we were, when we stepped into the *Lotus*. She soon took us to Ram Gopal's house where we spent the Puja-days. The festival was observed in the house, but he took no part in it, except that he submitted to the sprinkling of the water of peace (শান্তি জল), after the idol had been thrown into the river.....On leaving Baghati on foot, we got into the *Lotus* at Tribeni, and directed our course towards Murshidabad. The days passed happily. Our *chota hazry* consisted of tea, biscuits and eggs, our midday meal, of purely Bengali dishes,—boiled rice, dāl, and fish broth, and our supper, of English or Hindustani viand. Our morning and afternoon were generally spent in shooting. A pistol was one day put into my hand by Ram Gopal, and I was asked to fire. But I in fear said, "I never used a firearm, and am afraid I may be maimed." To this my friend said, "What harm if you lose your arm."

"We anchored at Murshidabad, but were prevented from landing by an unforeseen occurrence. A large boat laden with the Nabob's goods ran with great force against our launch, and caused some damage to her. Some of us retaliated the injury by getting into the boat and giving a good thrashing to the crew. After this, it was deemed unsafe to remain at the spot, and so we left for the junction of the *Bhagirathi* and the *Padma*. We reached the place and then the *Lotus* was steered towards Rajmahal. On our arrival here, we were surprised to see the ruins of the grand stone buildings that had been erected by the Nabobs. These were admirable works of art, and it is a great pity that time has committed so great a havoc on them.

From Rajmahal, we went to where the *Padma* met the *Mahanada*. The place was the haunt of pirates; and we had to keep a good watch all through the voyage. The sight of our steam launch was a wonder to the people there, for never had anything like it been seen before by them. They took us to be not men like themselves, and ascribed to us a place among the wonderful. Sometimes, we landed to buy milk for ourselves, but they carefully avoided us.

After this the *Lotus* got into a Rapid; and some of us suggested that we should desist from proceeding farther, but turn back our course. This proposal, Ramgopal determinately refused to accept, saying "Turning back is not in my vocabulary. No matter if the boiler burst, and our remains be blown up to the skies! I bear a charmed life." Finding him inflexible, we had the launch disburthened; and then the *Lotus* cut her way through the Rapid, Ramgopal singing Ram-mohan Ray's hymn 'There is no fear of anything if we fear Him' (God). We reached Malda, and enjoyed the hospitality of the Deputy Collector Babu. Spending a day or two here, we left for the ruins of Gour, 16 miles from the town. The way was jungly, and we passed it on elephants, having with us ample ammunition and firearms. The Civil Surgeon of Malda, whose name I do not now remember, (it may be Mr. Eton,) accompanied us. This gentleman and Ramgopal were on the back of one of the elephants, while the rest rode the others. A laughable incident happened during the journey, which I cannot pass over. Madan Tarkalankar dressed in semi-English costume (trousers and native fashioned coat) was riding down, with his long Brahminical lock of

hair (*Chaitan*) flying in the air—a comical sight indeed—and losing for a moment his balance fell to the ground. No power could have saved him from being trodden to death, if the animal by virtue of its former training, had not stopped, and remained still when the accident occurred.

We were soon at the end of our journey, and chose the ancient *Kotwali* as our quarters. Dr. Eton kept us company; and he and Ramgopal ate on the same table, while the others, including myself, fared on native food. Among the ruins of note we saw, there were those of the old *Dewan Khana*. Here the Emperor held his daily *Durbar*. There were beautiful carvings on the walls. From Dewankhana we went to see the famous tanks for which Gour was once celebrated. They were almost as big as lakes. The next object of interest was an edifice as high as the Monument in Calcutta. We were told that this was the place from where the Mahomedan astronomers made their observations of the heavens and their glories. From Gour we returned to Malda, and then in due time we came to Calcutta once more to attend to our daily routine of work."

Here ends Raj Narain and his friends' voyage to Gour. Let us now see through what transitions

of faith he passed through, and how he spent his life, before his soul found rest at the feet of Brahmoism. We cannot describe it better than by stating what he himself says in his Autobiography in the vernacular.

“When going through my college curriculum,” says Raj Narain, “my religious faith had to pass through different phases, till I was 19 years old; when I got acquainted with the venerable Debendra Nath Tagore, and became a Brahmo, as I have ever since remained. While at Hare school I had read “*Travels of Cyrus*” by Chevalier Ramsay. This was an English translation from French ; and that part of it which contained the explanation that the Egyptian priests had given to Cyrus of their religious books being allegorical stories, attracted my especial attention, and from that time I believed that the Hindu Purans were no better, and gave up idol-worship. But I had no fixed religion. Before my acquaintance with Debendranath, I had read Ram Mohon Roy’s ‘Appeal to Christian public in favour of the precepts of Jesus’ and Channing’s works, and had become a Unitarian Christian at heart. But here the vacillation of my soul did not end. For some

time after this, I thought of embracing the religion of the prophet of Mecca ; and then again had my mind poisoned by the infidel writings of Hume.

The following curious circumstance will explain what put into my mind the idea of becoming a follower of Islam. I have already said that Jnanendra Mohon Tagore read in the same class with me. When at college, he professed belief in the doctrine of Trinity. I hated it ; and in my arguments with him, I tried to show that the very proofs he advanced in support of his favourite doctrine, were admissible in favour of Mahomedanism. Paley then was an acknowledged authority in Christian theology ; and I asserted that the same arguments that the theologian had urged in favour of Christianity, might with equal force be advanced in support of the religion of the Mahomedans. At this apparent predilection of mine for this religion, some of my friends asked me, probably in jest, why I did not openly embrace it ? I replied "Well I must do so." Then I issued a notice, written and signed by me, to the effect that I would on a certain day that I mentioned, openly become a Mahomedan in the mos-

que in College Street. The notice was widely circulated ; and great would have been the gathering had it not been suspected that I was jesting with my friends. Yes, all this I did in jest ; and I am now very sorry for having made sport of a religion. I must here however, say that I was earnest in sifting the proofs in favour of Mahomedanism, and was after the perusal of 'Sale's Koran,' and chapters in 'Gibbon's Roman Empire,' about Mahomed and his successors, to some extent prepossessed in favour of the Mahomedan faith. But this state of mind soon saw an end."

One day during my College life, my father who as a *Vedantist* believed in the inseperable union of spiritual, and animal life, the vanity of the world, and salvation by annihilation, was expounding to one of our blood relations, and me, the last doctrine. I supported my father. But a single word uttered by our relation, when he got down the stairs to leave our house, shook my faith in the happiness of annihilation. 'Dear Raj Narain,' said he, 'Do not think much of what your father has said : know that it is better to eat sugar than to be turned into it.' This was a very wise saying and touched me to the heart."

"I should have continued two years more in the Hindu College, had not my health given in. At the beginning of 1884, I became dangerously ill, and the cause of this was excessive drinking. It was the common belief of the alumni of the college that drinking wine was one of the concomitants of civilization, and that there was no fault in it. The generation preceding, mostly consisted of those very libidinous ; but such men were not to be found in our generation. Chastity marked it ; and even strong drinks should have been avoided, if indulgence in them had not been thought a token of manliness and civilization. Every evening, I with my friends Iswar Chandra Ghosal—subsequently a Deputy Magistrate, Prosonno Kumar Sen, and Nundo Lal Mittra used to drink freely as much as we could, our trysting place being the side of the tank at College Square. There were outside the railings, shops of meat turned and roasted on spits, and we corrected our palates, and filled our stomachs with this Mahomedan repast. Our impatience to get it was sometimes too great to permit our egress through the gate ; and we often had to climb over the railings to satisfy our greed. Drinking raw brandy, and eating meat cooked by Mahomedans

was, we thought, the surest and the best way of reforming society. One night I came home dead drunk; and this affected my mother greatly; and she threatened to leave Calcutta, and, with it, my society, and go to Boral. Knowing how intemperate I was, my father adopted a very gentle, conciliatory, and even pleasant method, to make me temperate; and from this I found that he also ate food cooked by Mahomedans. The followers of Ram Mohun were also in the habit of drinking; but in this respect they differed from us, that when we drank like fishes, they made a very modest use of *aqua vitæ*. One of Ram Mohun Ray's disciples once drank to excess, and he was debarred from the house of his preceptor. I must here say what plan my father adopted to reclaim me, and how far it succeeded. Hoshen Amirali then a distinguished pleader in the *Sudder Dewani Adalut*, and afterwards made a Nabob in return for his services to government during the Mutiny, was my father's intimate friend, who sent him daily a tin-box which I thought contained documents to be translated. One evening my father called me into the office-room, shut the door, and from a drawer brought out a bottle of curacuo and another of sherry. Placing a

wine-glass near the bottles, he opened a large tin-box, having inside no documents as I fancied, but a good quantity of *Pilao*, *Kalia* and *Kopta*. Then he spoke to me you shall henceforth come here in the evening, and join me in enjoying these delicacies ; but beware of taking more than two glasses of sherry. If I find you drinking but with me, I will stop giving you this rich and nourishing food.' But moderate drinking did not satisfy me. I drank outside on the sly, and fell very ill. Fever attended the other complaints ; and I was laid up for six months. My father despaired of my life. He often used to recite a line from Hafez, the Persian poet, the meaning of which was, 'I do not know when my darling will leave me. The fear of it makes me tremble like an aspen.' It pleased God however to bless me with recovery. It was this illness that compelled me to leave college.

But greater calamities befell on me. Soon after my being on legs, my wife whom I had married when I was 17 years old, was drowned while swimming in a tank of her father's ; and my father died in December 1845. When he was being carried to the bank of the Ganges, I

to inform my neighbours what his religious faith was, asked him concerning it ; and he said that he was dying as a *Vedantist*. On the way, he was seen gently beating his forehead; and sorrowing that he left no property for me.

I have said before, that immediately before leaving College, I was something like an infidel ; but my father's and wife's death brought me to believe in my father's religion, *i.e.*, *Vedantism* : and at the beginning of 1846, I formally embraced Brahmoism. After the ceremony, we publicly drank sherry and ate biscuits to show our disbelief in caste. Eating the food forbidden to Hindus, and drinking wine, were prevalent among the Brahmos of our time, as among those of Ram mohun's days. But I do not mean to say that every one of the same faith with us did at his initiation observe this custom.

My protracted illness had made me wise, and at the time of which I am speaking, I was a moderate drinker. Long after-wards, I became an abstainer ; and when and why I became so, I will tell the reader here-after. My college friends were startled to hear of my conversion to Brahmoism. They thought me a wonderful creature. Almost

all of them were infidels, or indifferent to religion ; and they said that they had never dreamt the possibility of a bright Hindu College student's embracing Brahmoism. I must have to some extent lost their warm friendship ; but I was well compensated by Devendranath's friendly professions for me. Every evening his carriage took me to his house, and there we held a consultation on the best way of furthering the cause of our religion. I met there my old teacher in Hare School, Babu Durga Churun Banerjea, father of the renowned Surendra Nath Banerjea, and Shama Churun Sirkar, who has left behind him a name as interpreter in the highest tribunal in the land. Durga Charan Babu had translated the Upanishads into English, and that was the reason of his being highly appreciated by Debendra. Shyama Charan Babu was a zealous Brahmo, and his speeches were invaluable. Durga Charan was a sceptic in religion ; and the only reason for his sympathy with Brahmoism, was that he looked upon it as calculated to confer great benefits on the country."

The training Raj Narain received while a student of the college was thorough in every

respect. The subjects taught for the senior Scholarship Examination, were in no way inferior to those for the Premchand Raychand Scholarship Examination of the modern University. The versatility of his genius was marvellous. He had besides, a phenomenal memory, and a subject once read was sure to be fully grasped by him, and retained in memory for years to come.

The first situation that Raj Narain held was that of translating the Upanishads. He was appointed by the *Tottobodhini Sabha*, and he received Rs. 60 a month as salary. This was in 1846. He had previously applied for a Deputy Magistrateship, but his application had not been entertained. This might have damped the aspirations and energies of many an English Scholar of Raj Narain's time, but such was not its effect on him. His motto was that a man is not honoured for the post he holds, but for the way in which he fills it. And so he zealously and conscientiously devoted himself to his translation work, rewarded by the praise he received. The then secretary to "Bethune Society, Koilash Chandra Bose, thus wrote in the "Literary Chronicle," a popular journal of the time, "The

Upanishads are being translated by an erudite student of the Hindu College"; and in the preface to the chapter of Bibliotheca Indica on the Upanishads, Dr. Rowe, the Editor, recognized Raj Narain's translation of them as accurate.

Raj Narain soon became a recognized speaker in Bengali. His addresses given in the Brahmo Samaj, were treasured up as invaluable outpourings of a heart filled with love to God and man. We here give a free English rendering of a part of one of the speeches, which dwells on the happiness of heaven:—"Ah, in heaven, or at the foot-stool of God, there are eternal spring, non-ending youth, and undying love! and in this love there is no carnality. There is neither disease, nor death, neither grief, nor weeping; and the never inexhaustible fountains of godly meditation, and love, cause the soul to overflow."

The pecuniary difficulties of Devendra nath Tagore, after his father's death were so great, that he could not help the Brahmo Somaj as before; and so Raj Narain was compelled to give up his post, though his connection with the Somaj as its member, remained intact. In 1849, two years after his second marriage, he was

appointed Second English Master in Sanskrit College. He continued in this post for only two years, after which he was transferred to the Zillah School at Midnapore to fill the Head Master's post, which he occupied till 6th March 1866, and left on account of an obstinate and painful giddiness of the head. During the 15 years and a few months that he was at Midnapore, he did many things to further the cause of truth, and promote the welfare of his fellow-creatures; and some of these were:—

1. Changes introduced into the school.
2. The improvement of the Brahmo Samaj in the town.
3. The foundation of a Society for the promotion of national feeling among educated Bengalis.
4. The institution of a Temperance Society.
5. To create in his pupils a spirit of independence, to set their faculties in action, so that these might be exercised in the right channel, and be fully developed, he adopted a method of training unique in itself. He was not

a note-giving or lecturing teacher, but one who by apposite suggestions led the boys to make their way through many an intricate passage in English literature. History he handled so as to represent it as philosophy taught by examples. And Mathematics when taught by him ceased to be a dry subject. He opened a debating club for the benefit of the boys, and that there might be physical training, along with intellectual, he had a large building made in the school compound for the manly English games of Fives and Rackets.

The Brahmo Samaj at Midnapore had been in existence before Raj Narain's appearance in the town. But he threw new life and zeal into it, both by his personal example, and teachings. During holidays, he used to go round as a Brahmo missionary, and he commanded the reverence of all who came into contact with him.

At Midnapore he issued the Prospectus of a Society for the Promotion of National feeling among educated Bengalis, and the small treatise

he published on the subject, supplied thoughts on which late Nobe Gopal Mittra, based the structure of his national movements.

The current of public opinion in favour of strong drinks received a strong resistance from Raj Narain. We have alluded to his having been somewhat of a toper in early life; but subsequently with the maturity of his intellect, and his sad experiences as a drinker of alcohol, he became the hater of it; and while at Midnapore he enlisted himself in the cause of temperance, and attacked the demon in wine with unusual courage, thinking nought of the persecution he had to meet. He was even reported against to the Inspector of Schools by his antagonists who represented him as a fanatic preaching Brahmo views to his pupils, neglecting their education.

Raj Narain after resigning his service directed his mind solely to social and religious subjects. It was he who raised the voice of protest when Keshub Chandra Sen and his colleague Protap Chandra Mazumdar were being deified, and wrote many a pamphlet in English,—to bring these two eaders of the Progressive Brahmos down from the high—almost divine—pedestal on

which their followers had exalted them. This made him the eye-sore of many. But this he did not care. A strong party was formed against him, who unable to break a lance with him in logical argumentation, had recourse to open vituperations, satires, and lampoons, which however neither ruffled his mind, nor damped his spirits. He believed he was fighting for the cause of Truth.

Raj Narain's Brahmic faith was but the development of the Monotheistic element in Hinduism. His Brahmoism was but a spiritual form of the religion taught by the Hindu Shastras. He did not believe in Idolatry it is true, but he was no less a Hindu than the followers of the Shastras. He showed in word, and act, that his Theism was not an exotic, planted and watered by Western influences, but a plant of native growth rescued out by the men of his School, from the thorns and thistles of popular Hinduism that choked it. And after his attack on the followers of Keshub, above alluded to, he prepared and delivered a speech on the excellence of the religion of the Hindus. In his autobiography in Bengali, he describes the circumstances under

which the subject was suggested to him ; the popularity he gained by the speech among orthodox Hindus, and the keen criticism it brought on him from Christians as well as the Brahmos of the Progressive School.

“Two of my friends, says he “one day visited me in my house in Calcutta, and in course of conversation remarked that much could be said of the superiority of Christianity in comparison with other religions. I replied that the same remark might be applied with regard to Hinduism; and that I was prepared to support my assertion. And from this moment, I commenced collecting thoughts on the subject.

When subsequently I delivered my views in the form of a lecture, claps and shouts of applause, resounded through not only the lecture hall, but the street in its front.Rev. Lal Behari Dey, in his journal edited by him at the time called my speech a white-wash on Hinduism, with the lime imported from Midnapore, this remark of his being in reference to my having spent a considerable portion of my life at Midnapore. Dr. Murray Mitchel delivered a lecture combating my views. Keshab Babu, Pandit Shiva

Nath Shastri, and other young men of the same faith with them took up the cudgel against me, and there was not a day then on which their mouthpiece the "*Indian Mirror*" did not heap abuses on me."

Raj Narain's last literary production of importance was the the "Old Hindu's Hope." It was written in 1879 and greatly appreciated; and many journals in Calcutta lavished praises on the author. It urged the importance of lasting union among Hindus. "The old Hindu, says the *Mirror* "though physically old, is mentally, morally, and religiously more energetic, and enthusiastic than most of the younger members of the Hindu community." We are bound here to say, the views advocated by the old Hindu, supplied materials for the National Congress to work with in future.

We have hitherto related only some of the events in the great life of Raj Narain Bose, the maternal grand-father of Aravinda. Space does not permit us to relate more of his life and doings. We lack the opportunity also of watching the movements of his noble soul till it took its flight heavenward, for the publisher of his

biography has not traced down his career to its end.

We cannot however, pass over his life, without mentioning some of the bright traits of his character,—and these were patriotism of the highest type, the love of everything Aryan; Nationalism unsubdued, and unmodified by the Western culture he received. He was proud of his country, proud of its religion, and institutions; and he raised his voice against his dearest friends and relations even, when he found them aping foreign life. He lived for his country, and, served it even at a great self-sacrifice.

Many of his contemporaries—his class friends—had been somewhat anglicized, and had learnt to look down upon the institutions of their country; but he was full of Hindu Nationalism. There flowed in him two currents of thought—Oriental, and Occidental—and he let the former deluge his whole being, to fructify each nook and corner of his soul so as to produce a rich harvest of blessings for his country to reap. We can do no better than close this survey of his character with a few lines from the pen of a Nationalist.

“Two strong currents of thoughts, ideals, and aspirations met together and strove for supremacy in Bengal, among the generation to which Aravinda’s parents belonged. One was the current of Hindu Nationalism—of the revived life, culture and ideals of the nation that had lain dormant for centuries and had been discarded as lower and primitive by the first batch of English-educated Hindus, especially in Bengal. The other was the current of Indo-Anglicism—the onrushing life, culture and ideals of the foreign rulers of the land, which, expressing themselves through British law and administration on the one side, and the new schools and universities on the other, threatened to swamp and drown the original culture and character of the people. The two stocks from which Aravinda sprang represented the two conflicting forces.....

But while Raj Narain caught as fully as any one else among his contemporaries, the impulse of the new illumination, he did not lose so completely as many of them did, his hold on the fundamental spirit of the culture and civilization of his race. In him, it was not merely the spirit of Hinduism that rose up in arms against the onslaught of European Christianity but, the whole

spirit of Indian culture and manhood stood up to defend and assert itself against every form of undue foreign influence and alien domination."

There was however little in common between this forceful and dominant old man and Aravinda's father, Babu Krishnadhane Ghose. Sweetness of disposition, tenderness of mind, geniality of manners, and an ever-flowing sunshine in the heart which warmed and comforted everyone who came in contact with them—these were the common characteristics of both, but beyond this, their faith widely diverged. Mr. K. D. Ghose was a doctor in established practice when he married Rajnarain's eldest daughter, the mother of Aravinda. Mr. K. D. Ghose afterwards went to England to compete for the Indian Medical Service Examination. While prosecuting his studies in that country, his affectionate father-in-law wrote often to him not to lose the distinctive features of his nationality in the midst of the material civilization of England. But these hopes, as the old man records with self-restraint in his autobiography were destined to be frustrated. Mr. K. D. Ghose came back to India more anglicised than many Anglo-Indians

themselves; but the veneer of English civilization never completely over-laid the real gold of the heart within. He was sunny, genial, sweet and tender-souled as before, and in his professional capacity, the poor had always a tear of sympathy from him.

Aravinda was born in Calcutta on the 15th of August 1872. Aravinda's mother, the daughter of a rigid Hindu had in her all those elements that instilled a sense of the religious into the minds of all who came into contact with her. It was his mother who had played a great part in moulding the temperament and character of Aravinda. Mr. K. D. Ghose wanted to give his boys a thorough English training; and with that view sent young Aravinda, first to St. Paul's School, Darjeeling. He was then a tender boy of 5 years of age. The English masters under whom Aravinda read early discerned in that boy germs of greatness. He was the best beloved of his masters. He was always quick at mastering his lessons. We can almost see the boy with his deep, wistful eyes, earnest and thoughtful, looking as it were, into futurity moving about in the midst of a band of alien boys, gazing at times

upon the beautiful face of Nature; sweet and gentle of disposition, this pure-hearted boy was the glory of the School. His early years were spent amidst such surroundings of English life and manners. Here was opened before him a scene of Western civilization with all its glamour, the sight of which never faded from his memory. Silently and humbly, with many thoughts in his mind, the solitary boy grew from childhood to youth and from youth to manhood. After remaining at St. Paul's for two years, he was sent to England for his education. He was only 7 years old when he went to England. It may be a matter of surprise to many, but it is nevertheless the real fact, that Aravinda never knew any Bengali, till he was 18 or 19 years of age. And then he picked up a little smattering of his vernacular, for passing the Civil Service Examination, just as many an English student picks up a little Sanskrit or Hindustani for the same purpose. But whatever that may be, in England, young Aravinda was first educated privately at Manchester, and then sent to St. Paul's School, London. One little fact must be slightly touched here. Aravinda's father had a large professional income, but he had absolutely no knowledge of

the world or worldly affairs. He spent large sums in charity; and so, it often happened that he had no money to send to his sons in England. The boys had therefore to pass long months in utter destitution, and so became early inured to poverty and the hardships thereof.

CHAPTER V.

ARAVINDA'S EDUCATION AND CHOICE OF PROFESSION.

AS Aravinda grew up, entered the classes of the college and began his studies for the Civil Service Examination, and then for the tripos of the University, he became noticeable to all his masters and friends for his gigantic memory and his mastery of the English language. In 1890, he appeared at the Civil Service Examination, passed the literary test successfully and stood tenth in order of merit. But as we all know, he failed to pass the riding test, and thus was disqualified from entering the service. He was only a young boy of 18 years of age when he competed for the Civil Service Examination. It is often remarked by those who have not studied the man, that this failure to enter the Civil Service altered the whole subsequent course of Aravinda's life, this, we should say, is utter misconception of Aravinda's nature, and is besides, contradicted by the bare outer facts of his life. We all know that even after his failure at the

riding test, he entered a service which offered him prospects of worldly advancement almost as high as those which the Civil Service itself could offer. And yet, while serving as Vice-Principal, of the Baroda College, he renounced comfort, position, wealth to offer himself as a sacrifice at the altar of his Motherland.

In the chain of worldly coincidences, we often observe such events as strike our imagination by the strangeness of their existence. A young Englishman, Beachcroft by name, competed for the Civil Service Examination in the same year with Aravinda, and in the examination for Greek, Beachcroft stood second while Aravinda stood first. Eighteen years afterwards, the Englishman, as Session Judge of Alipore, was in the seat of justice, while before him in the prisoners' dock stood Aravinda—chained and hand-cuffed—awaiting his trial on a charge of treason and conspiracy. A curious irony of fate indeed!

Shortly after his failure at the Civil Service Examination, he entered King's College, Cambridge, as a scholarship-holder. His father had died in the meantime; and he had to depend for his expenses entirely upon the College-stipend.

From King's College, he graduated in 1892, getting a first-class in the classical tripos.

This winning of spurs was his last feat in the educational department: and he had to set about in right earnest for the adoption of a career in the world. Fortunately for him, he had not to wait long. The young and enlightened Maharajah of Baroda had recently come to England for a visit. Aravinda happened to be acquainted with him in 1892. and next year took service under him as confidential personal assistant.

It may justly be said, that a new chapter opened in Aravinda's life with his arrival at Baroda. He was now 21 years old; but much of his time he had passed in England. Deeply versed in the literature of Western countries, he grew a thorough Englishman. But, notwithstanding all this, he was a true Indian at heart; born of the indigenous soil of India. With all his Western education, in his ways and modes of thought he seemed far removed from it, isolated in the midst of an alien society with his eyes fixed intently on the moving panorama of an effete and depraved civilization,—its soulless splendour and the inadequate solution of pressing problems of life must

have touched his sensitive mind with disgust and feelings of horror. His heart longed for that deep peace and sweet harmony, that synthesis of conflicting claims and jarring susceptibilities which is the characteristic of the ancient civilization of the East. Indeed the time had now come when he could lay the foundations of a New Movement built on the religious reconstruction of a new philosophy of life. We should say, the 12 years of his residence at Baroda form a very important epoch in the life of Aravinda. They are the silent records of Aravinda's introspection, meditation and assimilation of the life, thought and culture of contemporary India.

At Baroda, Aravinda worked successfully in various capacities. Engaged in confidential work first he was attached to the Dewani office afterwards, and from there was transferred to the State College where he continued to act as professor for sometime. He acted for a short while as Private Secretary to the Gækwar and ultimately became the Vice-Principal of the College on a salary of Rs. 750 a month. The years he spent there were years of growth and silent evolution; of study and needful observation.

From a worldly standpoint he was extremely well-placed and comfortable there. He was popular among the students, and well thought of by the public, and held in high estimation by the Gækwar. Still in the prime vigour of his life, he might have ascended, if he had so liked, step by step, to the highest position of trust and dignity in the princely state of Baroda. But this life of rest and ease was not for him. The God of India wanted him to do nobler work for her sons than to rust in the cloistered seclusion of Baroda.

To choose a profession is always a perplexing business. It is especially perplexing if to choose a profession means to discover one's own capability and to do the work one is fitted to do in life. "How unfold one's little bit of talent; and live, and not lie sleeping, while it is called To-day?" That is the great problem. But it is a problem which occurs only to those who are troubled with a sense of Duty, and not to those whose ambition is to "get on." Carlyle has very pertinently remarked, "If you want to make sudden fortunes in it, and achieve the temporary hallelujah of flunkies for yourself, renouncing the perennial esteem of wise men; if you can believe

that the chief end of man is to collect about him a bigger heap of gold than ever before, in a shorter time than ever before, you will find it a most handy and every way furthersome, blessed and felicitous world. But for any other human aim, I think you will find it not furthersome. If you in any way ask practically. How a noble life is to be led in it? You will be luckier than Sterling or I if you get any credible answer, or find any made road whatever. Alas, it is even so? Your heart's question, if it be of that sort, most things and persons will answer with a 'Nonsense! Noble life is in Drury Lane, and wears yellow boots. You fool, compose yourself to your pudding!'—Surely, in these times, if ever in any, the young heroic soul entering on life, so opulent, full of sunny hope, of noble and divine intention, is tragical as well as beautiful to us." Times have not altered since Aravinda commenced his career as teacher of the world. To choose a profession, above all to discover one's own capability and reduce it to performance, is as embarrassing a problem to-day as it ever has been. But Aravinda never felt any embarrassment in his choice of profession.

The current of a New Spirit had flowed in the land, inundating every nook and corner of the human soul. Lashed into action by the high-handed measures of Lord Curzon, the lethargy of the people died away, and they tried for the time to stand upon their legs and face the world boldly. In an evil moment Lord Curzon mooted the proposal for the Partition of Bengal. He turned a deaf ear to the public opinion in India. This led to the manifestation of a New Spirit in Bengal. Aravinda saw from his seclusion in Baroda that a mighty wave of Nationalism was passing over the land and that he was best suited to act the helmsman at such a crisis. He could not tarry long, his soul found no rest in the work in Baroda, till he could come to Bengal to work in the cause of Nationalism. He might have been more distinguished in his capacity as Vice-Principal or Private Secretary. But the choice was wise because by his talents he was fitted, above all things, to be a master-Nationalist. It would be well to remember that the career which Aravinda chose was of an exceptional kind. It is not a career which is open to a large number of educated Indians, not a career which can be availed of by any but one or two men placed in special situations.

Aravinda deserves credit for the courage, the honesty and the wisdom he displayed in giving up wealth and position in Baroda, and to seek admission into a profession which offered him no worldly emoluments. He was to become a Man and a Patriot, and was to leave posterity in his debt for the blessings it should receive from his example. This idea he thought he could better carry out in the capacity he chose, than as Private Secretary or Vice-Principal. His choice showed that he had already become a Man and a Patriot. Nothing but manly independence could have prevented him from following the prevailing fashion and seeking worldly honour; nothing but patriotism of the highest type could have made him a willing servant of the nation. Patriotism is to Aravinda no abstraction but it is sympathy with, and respect for, those concrete realities, his own countrymen. The life of Aravinda, though of an exceptional character, will nevertheless teach his countrymen that worldly honour and position are not the only criteria of noble life, but that nobleness consists in doing noble things. His is a life hallowed by the memories of noble works in the mighty cause of his country.

CHAPTER VI.

THE AWAKENING IN INDIA AND ARAVINDA'S LIFE-WORK

THE brilliant and marvellous victories won by Japan in her recent war with Russia, and the crushing and irreparable blow which she inflicted on the "Colossus of Europe," helped to some extent to stir up the Indian nation to a remarkable degree. More than forty-five years ago, that great English writer, Matthew Arnold, wrote—

"The East bowed low before the blast,
 'In patient deep disdain;
She heard the legions thunder past,
 And plunged in thought again,"

It does not require much political sagacity to realise how pointless and inappropriate the poet's words have become at the present day. The peoples of the Orient are no longer wrapped up in the sleep of the centuries as the good poet assumed. Everywhere there is noticeable a visible sign of restlessness. Everywhere there is expressed, in no unequivocal terms, a feeling of

disdain and an expression of disgust against political servitude and restrictions on the legitimate freedom of citizens in any form. A keen sense of national self-respect has been roused, and a strong belief in the capacity of Orientals to successfully imitate and adopt modern political institutions has assuredly been created. India too has taken her share in this awakening of the East. She is no longer "an embodiment of all that is immovable and unchanging".

Witness for instance, the keen sense of self-respect among the Indians, asserting itself against every form of servitude; there has been a regular ferment in India and an anxious desire to assert herself as a world-power of some magnitude. She has shaken off the lethargy of ages and the conservatism of centuries. There is a desire manifest among the Indians to stand as world-masters of all the nations. Such a mighty wave of Renaissance overflowed India when Buddhism stalked over the land trying to crush Hinduism out of existence. Sankara was born at this critical moment to drive the demon of Buddhism out of India. This spirit of Renaissance again manifested itself when the *Kurus* went astray

from the path of virtue. In the West, it manifested during the latter part of the Seventeenth Century, when papal authority had reached its zenith.

English education began permeating the atmosphere of India with alien thoughts so far back as 1835. Actuated by political motive the English rulers in India saw clearly that English education was sure to revolutionise the thoughts and ideals of the Indians in time to come, transmuting them into incarnations of Anglicism. Raja Ram Mohan Ray was the first Indian who mastered English at a time when there was hardly any facility to learn it. The influence of English education on the first batch of Indians was simply marvellous. They went astray from the faith of their forefathers. As a result of English education Ram Mohan Ray preached a new religion. On the other hand the efforts of the English Missionaries to give English education to the Indians have also had their effect; some of our men from the rank and file of educated India began to look down upon the religion of their fore-fathers and adopted Europeanism *intoto*. Alien thoughts and ideas flooded the land, and men were fast receding from

the path of *Dharma*. This resurgent tide of Europeanism would have flowed unchecked had it not been arrested in its inception by the dynamic forces of Maharshi Debendra Nath Tagore on the one hand, and Keshub Chandra Sen on the other. Debendra Nath Tagore preached the unalloyed religion of the Vedas. His self-sacrifice coupled with the ideal of Aryan thoughts seem to have influenced the Hindu mind of India in his time. Keshab's religion was eclecticism of ideals culled from various sources. His theological discourses on Christ are nothing but the outpourings of a heart imbued with Christian thoughts. A Pan-Indian Christianity was Keshab's ideal.

Another mighty figure from the solitude of his seclusion in the outskirts of Calcutta was transmuting the thoughts of India by his preachings of Neo-Hinduism. That figure was *Ramkrishna Paramhansa*. He had gathered around him a small band of young men from the modern schools of learning and began expounding to them the gospel truths of Hinduism by parables. The *Vedanta* and the *Upanishads* based on the interpretation of the Vedas formed the master-subject of his discourses. He set back the tide of European thoughts

and the people once more realized that the religion of their fore-fathers was not a broken reed after all. He did not live long to carry on the propaganda of his mission. The mantle of inspiration fell on *Swamy Vivekananda*. His preachings in America helped to bring home to the minds of the Americans the spiritual grandeur and sublimity of Hinduism. Hinduism captured the young mind of India, our men now began to realize that the progressive march of the Indian nation must be made through the spiritual forces flowing from the fountain-head of Hinduism. We can have no corporate existence as a nation through any alien thoughts or ideals. The progressive march towards the ideal of nationhood does not depend upon anything material, but it is part and parcel of the spiritual growth of every individual.

When the soul awakens then it is that a nation becomes alive, and the life manifests itself in all the manifold forms of activity in which man seeks to express the strength and delight of the expansive Spirit within. It was in religion first that the soul of India awoke and triumphed. There were always indications, always great forerunners, but it was when the flower of the educated youth of Calcutta

bowed down at the feet of an illiterate Hindu ascetic, a self-illuminated extatic and "mystic" without a single trace or touch of the alien thought or education upon him that the battle was won. The going forth of *Vivekananda*, marked out by the master as the heroic soul destined to take the world between his two hands and change it was the first visible sign to the world that India was awake not only to survive but to conquer. Afterwards when the awakening was complete, a section of the nationalist movement turned in imagination to a reconstruction of India's past in all its details. This could not be. Inertia, or the refusal to expand or alter, is what our philosophy calls *Tamas* which tends to disintegration and disappearance. *Karma* is necessary for self-preservation, and when a force ceases to work, it ceases to live—that which remains stationary and stands merely for the defensive, that which retires into, and keeps within, its own "kot" or base as the late Swamy Upadhyaya used to put it, is doomed to defeat, diminution and final elimination from the living things of the world. We must be like *living* men full of energy, and to work peacefully for Nationalism must be our motto.

When the soul of the nation became awake in religion, it was only a matter of time and opportunity for it to throw itself on all spiritual and intellectual activities in the national existence and turn them to the best advantage. The outburst of anti-European feeling which followed on the Partition gave the required opportunity. Anger, vindictiveness and antipathy are not in themselves laudable feelings, but God uses them for His purposes and brings good out of evil. They drove listlessness and apathy away and replaced them by energy and a powerful emotion ; and that energy and emotion were seized upon by the National self and turned to uses of the future. The hatred against every form of Europeanism, the vengeful turning upon their commerce and its productions, the antipathy to everything associated with them, engendered a powerful stream of tendency turning away from the immediate Anglicised past, and the spirit which had already declared itself in our religious life entered by this broad door-way into politics and created a positive yearning towards the national past, a still more mighty and dynamic yearning towards a truly national future.

And what has this spirit done for us? It has brought in its train a mighty love for all that is beautiful and sublime in the store-house of Indian culture.

*

*

*

* * Our realization towards the goal of Indian regeneration has for its basis Swaraj, National education and Boycott.

Swaraj is not the colonial form of Government, it means the fulfilment of our national life. That is why God has sent us into the world to glorify Him by perfecting ourselves in our individual life, in family, in the community, in the nation, in humanity. He has sent us to the world to bring about this perfection, for this perfection is life and to depart from it is to perish. We do not want to perish as a nation. Our ideal of Swaraj involves no hatred of any other nation nor of the administration which is now established by law in this country. We find a bureaucratic administration, we wish to make it democratic; we find an alien Govern-

ment, we wish to make it indigenous ; we find a foreign control, we wish to render it Indian. They lie who say that this aspiration necessitates hatred and violence. Our ideal of patriotism is founded on the basis of love and brotherhood, and it looks beyond the unity of the nation and envisages the ultimate unity of mankind. But it is an unity of brothers, equals and freemen that we seek, not the unity of the master and the serf, of the devourer and the devoured. "We demand the realization of our corporate existence as a distinct race and nation, because that is the only way in which the ultimate brotherhood of humanity can be achieved,—not by blotting out individual peoples and effacing outward distinctions, but by removing the internal obstacles to unity, the causes of hatred, malice and misunderstanding. A struggle for our rights does not involve hatred against those who mistakenly deny them. It only involves a determination to suffer and strive, to speak the truth boldly and without respect of persons, to use every lawful means of pressure and every source of moral strength, in order to establish ourselves, and disestablish that which denies the law of progress."

There are two modes of work to effect this fulfilment. First, self-help, secondly, passive resistance. We must try to unite and organize ourselves in the interests of developing our industries, and thereby show our efficiency to work harmoniously on all questions of national progress. The essence of passive resistance is the refusal of co-operation so long as we are not admitted to a substantial share and an effective control in legislation, finance and administration. As a necessary corollary towards this fulfilment, boycott is a *sine qua non* to help our own nascent energies in the field of self-help. Boycott of foreign goods is a necessary condition for the encouragement of swadeshi industries, boycott of schools is a necessary condition for the growth of national education, boycott of British courts is a necessary condition for the spread of arbitration. Our *Sadhana* for this fulfilment must be centered round what we call *Swadeshi* in everything, free from any alien tincture—*Swadeshi* in commerce and manufacture, in politics, and in education, in law and administration,—in every branch of national activity. No doubt this is freedom, but its connotation has a higher meaning than mere political emancipation. Our freedom is

that blissful communion with *Brahmah* where things temporal cannot approach. When the Spirit becomes thus free, no geographical boundary can ever arrest its march. Political freedom follows in the wake of spiritual freedom.

To bring about this spirit of freedom among our countrymen, Aravinda saw that education on national lines was of paramount importance first. Schools he thought are the nurseries for the germination of patriotism in the mind of Indian children. Judging from the moral and material resources of our nation, in comparison with that of Japan, it has become more than ever manifest that if there is one thorough-going difference between India and her younger sister, sufficient in itself to account for their enormous inequality of position in the scale of nations, it is in the degree of patriotism with which they are respectively endowed. Among that most wonderful people the love of country amounts to a passion unparalleled in the history of the world. It is systematically taught in schools. From earliest infancy it is instilled into the minds of children. Indeed with them patriotism is an instinct, and instances of heroism centering round

that noble feeling are of the commonest occurrence in the land of the Rising Sun, contributing to place her as much ahead of other civilized nations of the world, as those others are ahead of us in that respect.

Our boys from the first day of their admission into schools begin to feed upon alien thoughts. The fundamental doctrine that is early hammered into the youthful mind here is that India has no glorious past worth being preserved in history; that our ancestors were well-nigh barbarians, and that as for their so-called excellence, why, it is all mythical. We are asked to believe, among other mighty things, that countless hordes of Native Sepoys fled in panic at the first shot of European musketry, that Oomachand and Nundkumar were swindlers, Sivaji a free booting assassin, the Sikhs were fanatics, and Hindustan a land of mare's nest! The Indian student thus early brought up in this wonderful lore, has all his faculty of admiration diverted from legitimate channels, and blossoms into the modern "educated gentleman" with no sympathy in him for aught that is born of Indian soil.

For how many of us grasp the real significance of, if we cannot feel enthusiastic over, our national institutions,—our annual festivals, to speak of nothing else, most of which are commemorative of the achievements of the nation from time to time, and in whose celebration the heart of the country throbbed at one time as under an electric current with genuine patriotic pride? How many of us who follow with such wonderful avidity the careers of Cromwell, Napoleon, Peter the Great, Nelson and Bismark from cradle to grave, have felt one thrill of joy at the prowess of young *Abhimanyu*, at the unflinching filial piety of *Ramchandra* or the superhuman integrity of *Yudhisthira*? How many indeed do know of them, and say in their inmost hearts, in a moment of patriotic exultation, “These are our ancestors, this land of ours gave them birth?” Nay we have neither the desire nor the opportunity to learn of them.

Education in India to-day, has to be not only national, but nation-making. We know what a national education is; it is a training which has a strong colour of its own, and begins by fostering in the child a love for his home and country,

through all that is familiar, and ends by making him true, cosmopolitan and universal. This is the necessary condition of all healthy education, in all countries, whatever their political position or stage of development may be. It was therefore the prime concern of Aravinda's life to make education in this country nation-making and with that view he joined the National Council of Education. After serving there for sometime as Principal at a great self-sacrifice, he was obliged to leave it owing to a "serious flaw somewhere in this brilliant opening of a new era." The great flaw, as Aravinda puts it, "was the attempt to combine the new with the old, to subject the conduct of the resurgence of India to the aged, the cautious, the hesitating, men out of sympathy with the spirit of the new age, unable to grasp the needs of the future, afraid to apply the bold and radical methods which could alone transform the nation, sweep out the rottenness in our former corrupt nature and, by purifying Bengal, purify India." It is the cold calculating spirit of the promoters of the movement that has put a spoke in the wheel of national education. It has, besides, introduced that vicious Western system of driving many subjects at a time into the growing intellect,

which ends after all in a waste of time without any good results at all. ✓

Aravinda after leaving the National Council of Education, joined the "Bande Mataram" staff, and from a teacher of students, he became a teacher of the world. The ambition which he could not fulfil as Principal of the National Council of Education, found its fulfilment as Editor of the "Bande Mataram." Here was a large scope for him to help materially towards nation-building in India. His reasonable and well-balanced articles, not infrequently with a touch of fire in them, afforded food for philosophic reflection to many an Indian. His contributions were like trumpet-call of the prophets of Old summoning erring humanity to paths of Duty and Righteousness. His writings helped to create a big volume of Nationalist-spirit in India. While serving as Editor of the "Bande Mataram" he tried to rally round the Nationalists to the Congress work. When the Congress held its sittings in Calcutta in the year 1906, Aravinda with brother nationalists tried to bring the Parliament of the Nation out of the atmosphere of artificiality to that of reality. It was unanimously

resolved in that Congress to have for its goal *Swaraj* or self-government on the lines of self-governing colonies, and it passed certain resolutions on *Swadeshi*, Boycott and National Education. The next year when the Congress met at Surat, the nationalist-resolutions passed in Calcutta were excluded from the programme of the Congress; and the moderate leaders behaved with the Nationalists on the validity of these questions in a way unbecoming of them. As a natural sequel to it, there ensued a schism in the Congress camp. Wherever we see Aravinda, we see him working in the mighty cause of his motherland. There is nothing sham about him; he may very well be compared to that real gold which has been tested in the crucible of fire. His intense love for all that is good in the store-house of Indian culture, has made him the real prophet of New India, to be loved and revered by the entire Indian nation.

It was Aravinda's dream of life to transform the Congress from the occasion of a festival or show "intended to excite enthusiasm and propagate sentiment," into that of an assembly composed of a severely practical and matter-of-fact

body. The practical work he suggested, was to be done by quite different organisations, provincial and local, carrying out the policy fixed by the deliberative body, but differently constituted; for, as the object of an executive body is entirely different from the object of a deliberative body, so its constitution, rules and procedure must be entirely different. Aravinda was of opinion that the assembly should be called not the Nationalistic Congress or Convention, but Nationalistic Council. He was of opinion that the maximum number of delegates must be fixed and apportioned to the different parts of the nation according to their numbers. Secondly, he suggested that in the proceedings themselves, all elements of useless ornament and redundancy must be purged out, such as the long Presidential speech, the Reception Committee, Chairman's speech and the division of the proceedings into the secret and effective Subject Committee sittings, and the public display of oratory in the full assembly.

The next question that he suggested, was that of procedure and constitution. He said that there should be no autocratic President, no oligarchy of ex-Presidents and long-established officials, no

looseness of procedure putting a premium on party tricks and unfair rulings. He then suggested the re-constitution of the electorate. It was his desire to create a register of voters throughout the country, who could form a real electorate. He is not the man to buy a name at the expense of principles as some of our so-called patriots do. Aravinda's unselfish work in the cause of Congress and National education will make his name handed down to posterity as that of the greatest prophet of Nationalism in the twentieth century.

CHAPTER VII

ARAVINDA AS A POLITICIAN.

IT has, in season and out of season, been dinned into our ears that a subject nation has no politics. Sometime ago a so-called Swamiji while addressing a meeting in Madras made some sarcastic remarks at the idea of the Indian nation's discussing politics! These lickspittles of society who are ever unsparing in their remarks to denounce the discussion of politics do not quite understand the meaning of the term. They simply betray an ignorance profound in its depth very much like their own learning. When we find a ruler indulging in wild pranks to sub-serve his own selfish motive, are not the ruled justified to criticise his actions? The province of politics is higher than that of mere sordid discussion of this or that subject. It idealizes the ultimate harmony between the state and the individual. It is part and parcel of the education of man. As we have a right to breathe the pure air of heaven, so we have a right to speak of our own country, no matter who the ruler is.

Political discussion had hitherto been carried on in the spirit of singing laudation to the administration of Government, however palpable its defects seemed to be. It had been confined to the mendicant spirit in India. Mendicancy in politics had been the dream of our patriots. This spirit of mendicancy had taken all the grit and go out of the character of our men. It had never taught us the lesson of self-help or self-reliance. It had been tested in the ordeal of fire, and found wanting. A reconstruction of the methods of political discussion was therefore deemed to be of paramount importance by the men of the New School of thought. To speak the truth, and to speak it boldly without any respect of persons, became one of the methods with the nationalists in the discussion of politics. Another method was passive resistance backed up by the moral support of the nation. These methods have done a great deal of valuable work in the way of criticism, and have brought in their train a volume of moral weight to bear on the actions of the Government. These methods have also given weight to views entertained by the nation. The object of these methods has been neither one of anarchism nor one of nihilism run mad.

Political discussion in this country demands certain qualifications which are seldom found combined in one individual. He must be a man of large and independent views with a mind freed from all prejudice or bias. He must in addition to these, be no respecter of persons. This again must be backed up by intellectual and moral qualifications of a high standard. In Aravinda, we find these qualifications combined in the highest degree. If Aravinda had been tied to his work in Baroda, representing a special type of administration, then with all his abilities, his experience, his zeal and his public services, he could not have been a political leader in India to-day.

Aravinda instilled enthusiasm into politics and his advocacy of Nationalism, was among the causes of his popularity. In spite of appearances, there is no radicalism in India, there is little of political enthusiasm. The enthusiastic politician is applauded; the propounder of new ideals of reform, is admired for his courage and ingenuity. But the temper of the majority of our men is cold and despondent; their settled mode of thought mainly pessimistic; their sense of dependence on Government, and of their own weakness, too strong to

be removed by animated appeals or brilliant forecasts. As soon as they get breathing time they feel they must moderate their ardour. The poverty of their home stares them⁵ in the face and brings them back to a sense of submission to the inevitable. Therefore, new ideas have a feeble hold on their minds, and their enthusiasm is short-lived; and a leader who keeps pace with them, they are prepared to follow; all other leaders they renounce. Restless, adventurous, progressive races of the West, seek enthusiastic leaders; and some of them, like the French are eager to grasp at new ideas. They are hopeful even to desperation; their motto is Action, not Resignation. Aravinda clearly saw with the judgment of a seer that to make the discussion of politics a subject of permanent interest in India, the dormancy of the people must be roused, making them understand that we cannot dispense with politics, just as we cannot dispense with our food to sustain our life. Aravinda gave life and shape to the discussion of politics in India. Half-heartedness is an antiquated policy in politics. It has never done any good either to the country or to the ruler. To speak boldly without any respect of persons is not certainly breaking the law.

"The fear of law is for those who break the law. Our aims are great and honourable, free from stain or reproach, our methods are peaceful, though resolute and strenuous." This is what our hero has said with regard to our work in the cause of Nationalism. We must not shrink from boldly stating what we consider to be our birth-right, no matter however unscrupulous the persecutions of the Government be.

Aravinda is undoubtedly the leader of the New School of thought in India. There are men of wealth and position in India; there are men of abilities and attainments, but there is no man in whom all the qualifications are united as they are in Aravinda. Several men of wealth and position have not the necessary intellectual qualifications; several men of abilities have not the courage to make them revered leaders; some men who have position and ability take little interest in politics and do little work; some lack the necessary social virtues; and some are incapacitated for political leadership by an imperious and bragging temper. Aravinda's work, was not an advertisement for self-aggrandisement. His was a work humble, and free from the stain of any

selfishness. What is needed for political leadership, in India, is not wealth or social position, but real self-sacrifice in the cause of the motherland. We want political *Sannyasis* for the regeneration of our country. They are the real men who do real work. Political emancipation was never bought by money; self-sacrifice is essential to the attainment of this goal.

It is sometimes remarked that men of wealth and position, are the "natural leaders" of the country. It is a misconception of the worst type to denominate them as leaders of society or country. They are entirely the creatures of the state. They are the recipients of a favour which they had nothing to deserve. They have grown fat on the crumbs of the state. They are never moved to sympathy for the people. They look down with contempt on their poor fellow brothers from the high altitude of their position. They care nothing for the country or their countrymen. They are like parasites on our society and country.

The rich are not the "natural leaders" of the country, for it is certain, that they as a class, do not lead the people. The educated

people lead themselves and do not acknowledge the authority of the rich; nor do the ryots recognise them as leaders. India is a country which has always given prominence to things supramundane, hence the leaders of society have always been such men as have cared not for wealth or position. Their goal of life has always been beyond things earthly.

Aravinda's political work does not now stand forth in any visible shape. But if guidance of public opinion, and the vigilant and trenchant criticism of public measures, have any value, he did valuable work. Such work in India, is not generally esteemed; it does not attract men's attention, or excite their fancy; but all careful students of the lives of men and nations must acknowledge the importance of work which is critical rather than constructive, and whose results are subtle and impalpable rather than concrete and tangible. Two great principles have to be recognised. To guide public opinion, to prepare it for a particular action, is at least as valuable work as the action itself. And the severe criticism of any measures is no less valuable work than the accomplishment of good. After opinion has been matured, action comes in the ordinary

course of things. Men who teach principles do more important work than the men who apply rules founded on those principles. The men who have most profoundly influenced the destinies of the world are its religious teachers, for they have inculcated the widest principles to which all action may be referred. A single religious doctrine, a single philosophical idea, has more pervasive and far-reaching consequences than cartloads of legislative enactments. It is the principles that guide the lives of men. All kinds of work, intellectual and practical, demand not only that certain things should be done, but that certain things should be consciously abstained from. The progress of moral life consists not only in the pursuit of good aims, but in resisting temptations to evil. Everywhere the negative is of as much importance as the positive. Aravinda's propaganda of work was based on certain moral principles, hence it is that he was able to do a world of service to the nation at large. The critic has also a lesson to teach and it is more effective when it is backed up by the moral culture of the man.

To preach certain principles to the nation does not surely mean anything against Government, which therefore has no right to repress the

propagation of these principles. It is not always that all principles should be looked upon with a kindly eye by Government. All men have not the same views. Aravinda has been branded by Government as the arch-conspirator trying to subvert the British administration. Far from it, he has always tried to bring about a synthesis of harmony between the ruler and the ruled. Aravinda was no doubt very severe in his criticism of some of the high-handed measures of the Government, and he was morally justified in doing this.

Laws are said to be made for the safety, the security and the protection of the interests of the people : they are not made to chastise and oppress. They must be guided by reason, necessity, expediency—in the interests of all. They must injure none : they must not remorselessly override the domain of reason and conscience. They must act with justice and circumspection. “Render unto Cæsar that which is Cæsar’s,” does not mean that men should resign themselves body and soul to the law, at the law’s bidding. A certain man was fined in London, because he refused to have his child vaccinated. On moral grounds

he was right not to set aside his conscientious scruples. To obey his conscience he became a resister. In the words of Thoreau, this man was a *man* first and a *subject* afterwards. He obeyed the law of conscience before^d blindly complying with the alternative of man-made law.

There is much force in what Thoreau has written on the ethics of passive resistance. "Unjust laws exist: shall we be content to obey them, or shall we endeavour to amend them, and obey them until we have succeeded, or shall we transgress them at once? Men generally under such a government as this (United States) think that they ought to wait until they have persuaded the majority to alter them. They think that if they should resist, the remedy would be worse than evil. But it is the fault of the Government itself that the remedy is worse than evil. It makes it worse. Why is it not more apt to anticipate and provide for reform? Why does it not cherish its wise minority? Why does it cry and resist before it is hurt? Why does it not encourage its citizens to be on the alert to point out its faults and do better than it would have them." If any Government insists upon everybody to sacrifice his

conscience in order to obey the man-made laws, does it not then mean that they are a bit higher in authority than God Himself?

Aravinda's ideal of political life was neither utopian nor quixotic. All that he demanded was, that all men are entitled to have equal opportunities, without which, the progress of human society becomes a dead-lock. The decay of society means the death of the nation. The claim to equal opportunity, is really set up not by the individual or for the individual but for Society, itself, the realisation of its own ends. "If social life", says a Nationalist, "were not something organic, that is something which had an end unto itself, if social relations were not something interdependent upon one another and upon the collective life of the community as a whole, if individual self-realisation were possible without the simultaneous furtherance of social ends, if it were possible without the similar self-realisation of the other members of the social whole, human equality would have no ethical significance, and human freedom would kill all altruism, and selfishness instead of self-sacrifice, would be the normal rule of life; struggle for existence and

the survival of the fittest, would be the law of the human, as it is, to such an extent, the law of the animal kingdom; and liberty would mean not closer unity and stronger amity, but keener discord and wider gulf between man and man." The perfection of humanity through the development of society was Aravinda's shibboleth. He fully realised what a serious loss the elimination and obliteration of individual peculiarities would be to the collective life and evolution of society. Our Government had set up barriers towards the growth of this individual life, so Aravinda tried, by his denunciations of Government measures obstructing the growth of such life, to restore individual equality. This was the great mission of his life. To this end he lived and worked amongst us.

CHAPTER VIII.

ARAVINDA'S MORALITY AND RELIGION.

RELIGION formed the basis with Aravinda, to build up the grand edifice of morality on it. Religion divorced from morality dwindles into an artificial mummery of mere show. In all his writings and speeches, morality and religion were always in evidence. His was a soul beautiful and humane, high above meanness of every kind, incapable of evasion, scornful of subterfuge, capable of any self-sacrifice, reckless of any consequences to himself when he stood for the right. There is a powerful tendency in human nature that appertains to the flesh,—trying always to stand in the way of all good works, and it is religion that saves a man from being lost in the vortex of animal propensities. Religion in its higher sense is synonymous with all that helps towards the evolution of the entire man. This tendency of the animal in us, must of necessity, be first exhausted by *bhoga* or enjoyment, afterwards to be dominated and weakened by *nigraha*

of control and, finally, when it is weak, to be got rid of by *Sanyama*, rejection or self-dissociation. Aravinda has very truly remarked that *Sanyama* is necessary to give a masterful force to our morality. Without *Sanyama* our morality withers away—nay it merges into a dead matter. The forces of cruelty, lust, mischievous destruction, paingiving folly, brutality, ignorance, are rampant in human society, but it is the dynamic force of *Sanyama* that curbs the demon in them. It was Aravinda's religion that gave a moral force to all his movements. Aravinda's creed for the unification of India under the banner of nationalism, was a new spiritual impulse based on Vedanta, demanding the essential oneness of man, and showing the transient and utilitarian character of institutions, the lofty ideals of brotherhood, freedom, equality, and a recognition of the great mission, and a mighty future of the Hindu spiritual ideas and discipline of the entire Indian race.

Vedanta formed the bedrock for the realisation of Aravinda's political ideal. It lays stress on the perfection of humanity through the development of social life. In order to work out this problem of national life, it is necessary to

subject ourselves first to certain rules of discipline for developing the force within, and turning it to such uses as may benefit the possessor, or mankind. It is the practice of *Brahmacharyya*, says our hero, which is the most essential element in the up-building of Indian nation. All human energy has a physical basis. The mistake made by European materialism is to suppose the basis to be everything and confuse it with the source.

The source of life and energy is not material but spiritual, and the basis, or the foundation on which the life and energy stand and work, is physical. The ancient Hindus clearly recognised this distinction between *Karan* and *Pratistha*, the north pole and the south pole of being. Earth or gross matter is the *Pratistha*, *Brahma* or spirit is the *Karan*. To raise up the physical to the spiritual, is *Brahmacharyya*; for by the meeting of the two, the energy which starts from one and produces the other, is enhanced and fulfils itself.

To understand it, we must have a thorough grasp of the physical and psychological conformation of the human receptacle of energy. The fundamental physical unit is the *retas*, in

which the *tejas*, the heat, light, and electricity in a man is involved and hidden. All energy is latent in the *retas*. This energy may be either expended physically or conserved. All passion, lust, desire, wastes the energy by pouring it, either in the gross form, or a sublimated subtler form, out of the body. Immorality in the act throws it out in the gross form; immorality of thought, in the subtle form. In either case there is waste, and unchastity of the mind and speech, as well as of the body. On the other hand, all self-control conserves the energy in the *retas*, and conservation always brings with it increase. But the needs of the physical body are limited, and the excess of energy must create a surplus which has to turn itself to some use other than the physical. According to the ancient theory *retas* is *jala* or water, full of light, heat, and electricity,—in one word, of *tejas*. The excess of *retas* turns first the heat or *tapas* which stimulates the whole system, and it is for this reason, that all forms of self-control and austerity, are called *tapas* or *tapasya*, because they generate the heat or stimulus which is a source of powerful action and success; secondly, it turns to *tejas* proper, or, the energy which

is at the source of all knowledge; thirdly, it turns to electricity, which is at the basis of all forceful action, whether intellectual or physical. In electricity again is involved the *pransakti* which proceeds from ether.

The *retas* being refined from *jala* to *tapas*, *tejas* and *vidyut* and from *vidyut* to *ojas*, fills the system with physical strength, energy and brain-power and in its last form of *ojas* rises to the brain, and fills it with that primal energy which is the most refined form of matter, and nearest to spirit. It is *ojas* that creates a spiritual force by which one attains to spiritual knowledge, spiritual love and faith, and spiritual strength. The more we increase the store of *tapas*, *tejas*, *vidyut* and *ojas*, the more shall we fill ourselves with energy for the works of the body, heart, mind and spirit.

We should say, that this view of the human soul, was not the sum total of the knowledge on which ancient Hinduism based its educational discipline. Hinduism recognises that all knowledge comes from within, and has to be evoked by education, rather than instilled from outside.

The constitution of man consists of three principles of nature, *sattwa*, *rajas* and *tamas*, which in one of their manyfold aspects manifested as knowledge, passion, and ignorance. This conception of the constitution of the knowing faculty made the removal of *tamas*, the disciplining of *rajas* and the awakening of *sattwa*, the main problem of the teacher. He had to train the student to receive the illumination from within. The whole code of Aryan culture was thus fed from a living source, and spread its genial influence throughout India.

It is the fashion in certain quarters to twit at the idea of Independence which the Indians so fondly cherish. Independence in all our movements is the goal of life, and Hinduism alone will fulfil this aspiration of ours. It is sheer stupidity to feed the Indian mind on something which is totally alien to its nature. All growth depends upon the nature of the soil suitable to the vitalising power inherent in a thing. A tree of Western climate will hardly grow on Eastern soil. Aravinda understood it very well that the full growth of the Indian nation depended upon Hindu morals and Hindu

religion. Western education, with all its good works, will hardly be able to mould the Indian mind to an Oriental conception of all things. It totally divests the Indian mind of all its spiritual element,—making it run along the path of a sort of Agnosticism withering its hopes and aspirations towards a Power that makes for righteousness. Western education has developed a spirit of iconoclasm. It has destroyed, in a sense, all that is pure and sublime in Hinduism. Those who say that destruction is necessary for the elimination of erroneous ideas, must first judge whether our ideas are wrong or not. We must first of all impartially examine if our *ideas* of Hinduism are false or erroneous. We must not judge these ideas from an English standpoint, they are to be judged from our own standpoint. An Englishman can never grasp the spirit of Indian culture, as it is thoroughly foreign to his nature—far less to judge of its merits or demerits. To compare Eastern ideas with a Western standard, is to compare an Indian lotus with a lily! Imitation of English manners, and the absorption of English influences, have given a death-blow to Hindu society. If a re-construction be necessary, it must come from

the fountain-head of Hindu morals and Hindu religion.

Aravinda believed in the re-vitalising power of Hinduism. His own life is an embodiment of all that is sublime in Hinduism. He not only demanded *swaraj* with a view to the exaltation of intellect or the character of the people, but for the growth of Indian society, which is a necessary condition in the economy of Hindu life. Not only do ideas determine political life, but political life evokes ideas; and there can be no doubt that the active exercise of our political rights, and discharge of our political duties, will prove to be a regenerating influence of a deeper and more pervasive character, when backed up by religion. We as a nation can never aspire for political freedom, unless we morally deserve it. It was Aravinda's desire to make all India morally fit for political independence.

Aravinda had a firm faith in the power of religion. He has explicitly said "Military or physical power is not the only power. There is also a spiritual power which is based upon knowledge." It is this spiritual power which he believes would

uplift India once more on the pedestal of her pristine glory. We can develop this power by moving along the line shown by the Hindu shastras.

Nationalism to Aravinda is more than a political object, or a means of material improvement. To him it is surrounded by a mist of glory, the halo that mediæval saints beheld gleaming around the head of martyrs. "Nationalism", says Aravinda, "is a religion that comes from God." Again in another place, he says, "Nationalism cannot die, because it is God who is working in Bengal. God cannot be killed, God cannot be sent to goal. Have you got a real faith, or is it merely a political inspiration, a larger kind of selfishness? . . . You all know what Bengal used to be; you all know that the name of Bengali used to be a term of reproach among nations. What has happened? What made the Bengali so different from his old self? One thing has happened, Bengal is learning to believe. Bengal was once drunk with the wine of European civilization, and with the purely intellectual teaching that it received from the West. It began to see all things, to judge all things,

through the imperfect instrumentality of the intellect. When this was so, Bengal became a land of doubters and cynics. . . .

“The intellect, having nothing more to offer save despair, became quiescent, and when the intellect ceased to work, the heart of Bengal was open and ready to receive the voice of God whenever He should speak. When the message came at last, Bengal was ready to receive it, and she received it in a single moment. In a single moment the whole nation rose, the whole nation lifted itself out of despair; and it was by this sudden awakening from a dream that Bengal found the way of salvation, and declared to all India, that eternal life, immortality, not lasting degradation, was our fate. . . .

“It is not by mere political programme, not by National Education alone, not by Swadeshi alone, not by boycott, that this country can be saved. Swadeshi by itself might merely lead to a little more material prosperity, and you might forget the real thing you sought to do in the glamour of wealth and in the desire to keep it safe. In other subject countries also there was

material development. . . . When the hour of trial came it was found that those nations which had been developing materially were not alive. . . . The forces of the country are other than visible forces. There is only one force, and for that force I am not necessary, you are not necessary, he is not necessary. Let us all be thrown aside as so much waste substance, the country will not suffer. God is doing everything. When he throws us away, He does so, because we are no longer required. But He is immortal in the hearts of His people." Whatever Aravinda wrote or said, appealed more to spirituality or belief in religion than to anything else. We can do nothing without the help of religion. Man must first of all raise himself from all material thoughts to that altitude of spirituality, where he merges into divinity itself to battle for the warfares of life. Success comes in only where religion is supreme. Man must deny himself the animal pleasures of life, if he wishes to become a patriot or a reformer. The coarser pleasures of life seem to be especially well adapted to develop sympathy among those who participate in them. Aravinda is remarkable not only for his talents but for purity of life and

honesty of character also. His virtue is not only of the negative sort, but is largely identified with active beneficence. He lives not only a Hindu life, but clearly sees the evils of the British regime which have devitalized Hindu society.

In all our activities of life,—in order to achieve success, Aravinda also laid stress on the religion of self-sacrifice. In a country where jealousy is so rampant between the old and the young, the rich and the poor, the successful and the struggling, there can hardly exist a community of interests to work in harmony for a common object. Self-sacrifice is necessary to knock on the head of that green-eyed monster *jealousy* for success in life. It is only when we sacrifice our little 'self' at the altar of work, that success comes in of itself. A man capable of self-sacrifice, whatever his sins may be, has left the animal behind him : he has the stuff in him of a future and higher humanity. The real development of the god in man, does not begin until we are capable of self-sacrifice—not even caring for those who are nearer and dearer to us by ties of sweet realationship. To work for the country is nobler than to serve our father or mother. What could

be more honourable than to die, if need be, in the service of our country. It is the Hindu religion that demands this self-sacrifice on behalf of every Indian for the furtherance of the ideal of *Swaraj*. Self-sacrifice to work for one's country, or to die in its service, if need be, does not mean that one should lend countenance to such ignoble acts as have brought a slur upon Indian character. All our works and doings must be tempered by religion and morality. We must drown all our petty bickerings of life in the illimitable ocean of religion. How soul-stirring, and pregnant with a mystic halo of religion, is the doctrine of self-sacrifice enunciated by Aravinda. It is religion, says our hero, that imparts a sacredness to every work whether self-sacrifice or other, and this again demands that we should devote ourselves, heart and soul, for its fulfilment. Without this idea one can do nothing—expect nothing.

CHAPTER IX.

ARAVINDA IN TROUBLE.

ARAVINDA'S advocacy of Nationalism and his fearlessness in exposing the high-handed measures of Government presaged that the storm of persecution would sooner or later blow upon him. On the 3rd of May 1908 in the still hours of the night a *posse* of armed policemen surrounded his house and arrested him on the charge of being implicated in a conspiracy to provide rifles and dynamite for revolutionary purposes. Evidence of all sorts was therefore fabricated by the prosecuting counsel for proving the charge against him, but the inscrutable dispensation of an all-loving Providence brought all the tricks of the counsel to nought and he was honourably discharged by the presiding tribunal. Aravinda with other youngmen was arrested, and the prosecution dragged on for more than a year; these men were confined in jail during the period and were subjected to the treatment of the prison-cell.

What do these troubles teach us ? They impart the lesson of how they chasten the man of all his material propensities. Troubles are necessary to renovate our life,—they bring out the true man from out of the ordeal. The lives of saints and martyrs were not free from the storms of persecutions,—and what a halo of glory surrounds their names though buried amidst the ashes of the dead. There is a sacredness in suffering, and who can not recall the scene when the ancient Christian martyrs were burnt alive for their love of truth. Such sufferings go deep into the soul and purge it of all its impurities. These sufferings give us a foretaste of that glorious vision to which our hearts so fondly gravitate. Life must be tested in the furnace of suffering. There is a sweetness all its own in suffering.

A life that has been a bed of roses throughout, lacks that higher spiritual force which sufferings impart to it. God reveals Himself amidst the afflictions of suffering, The Christian saint Bunyan when passing his days in the darkness of Bedford, prison, saw the vision of God. Without suffering life is no better than a “tinkling cymbal.” It is in suffering only that the human soul holds

communion with God. Suffering is indispensably necessary to attack, fight and subdue the grosser nature before the higher can be in evidence. The spiritual illumination overtakes the human soul when the ego is killed in the furnace of suffering. This is the aim and object of Hindu culture. Mark the life of those religious heroes who pass their days and nights in the deep recesses of the forest, amid untold sufferings. It is there that they get a vision of God. God revealed Himself to Aravinda in his prison-cell. He instilled courage and hope into Aravinda's soul. Whatever grossness there was in his nature was purified by the touch of the Lord. He became a new man, and to work in harmony with His injunctions became the one overmastering impulse of his life.

Aravinda in his address at Jhalakati Conference said "We were building an edifice to the temple of our Mother's worship—were rearing her a new and fair mansion, a place fit for her dwelling. It was then that He came down upon us. He flung himself upon the building we had raised. He shook the roof with His mighty hands, and part of the building was displaced and ruined.

Why has He done this? Repression is nothing but the hammer of God that is beating us into shape so that we may be moulded into a mighty nation, and an instrument for His work in the world. We are iron upon His anvil and His blows are showering upon us not to destroy, but to recreate. Without suffering there can be no strength—no national growth at all.....We are a people ancient as our hills and rivers, and we have behind us a history of manifold greatness, not surpassed by any other race; we are the descendants of those who performed *tapasya* and underwent unheard of austerities for the sake of spiritual gain, and of their own will submitted to all the suffering of which humanity was capable. We are the children of those mothers who ascended with a smile the funeral pyre, that they might follow their husbands to another world. We are a people to whom suffering is welcome and who have a spiritual strength within them, greater than any physical force." We must not be daunted by the mightiness of suffering,—it shapes us into an instrument of work to be used by God Himself.

When Aravinda stood before the bar of the English tribunal as a criminal, he had not the

means wherewith to defend the case. He was as penniless as a street beggar. Did this damp his spirit? Never. God gives him every thing, who works for Him. God raised in his sister a woman of uncommon spiritual strength. She stood before the public with a begging-bowl in her hand, asking help of them to defend the case. The public answered her appeal in an unstinted way. Money began to pour in from all quarters. Instead of whining in a corner like a little baby, she stood up bravely, and appealed for her brother's help. Aravinda's wife too has played not a common part in the cause of the country during this political crisis in India. She worked, helped, and consoled her husband in everything that he did and suffered. They are the pride of our country. Would to Heaven that India had many such sisters amongst us!

After a protracted trial of more than a year, Aravinda was honourably acquitted by the presiding judge. After a brief respite, his restless soul longed for work. He again plunged himself into the country's work. *Karmayogin* an English weekly was started as an organ of the New Spirit in India, and Aravinda became one of its chief

contributors. He was always troubled by detectives and other police officers. These myrmidons always followed him close upon his heels wherever he went. Troubles always hemmed him round, but he was full of that courage which knows no fear.

Courage, he rightly saw, was the first thing to create, or maintain in any people, especially in a subject people like the Bengalis, who had so long been taunted with cowardice. When the hour of trial comes,—when persecutions and sufferings follow in succession the works of patriots or reformers, it is then that weak minds quail before them, and, not unfrequently succumb to their pressure in timidity. Where the consciousness of timidity exists among a people, the first duty of a patriot is to remove it at all costs. Cowardice impedes the growth of manly qualities in a man, so Aravinda said, “Courage is your principal asset. Heroism, says Emerson, feels and never reasons, and therefore is always right. If you are to work out the salvation of your country, you will have to do it with heroism. You have voluntarily cut yourselves off from outside help, to develop strength from within.

Darkness will hem you round, disappointments will cross your path, slander will pursue you from behind, but you are to depend on yourselves, and yourselves alone. You must press on, and not allow yourselves to be dragged back by encumbrances in the name of unity. You have your only guide in the loftiness and spirituality that make their heaven in the thought of the wider light and purer happiness that you may bring to your country by long force of vision and endeavour. The rapturous contemplation of a new and better state for your country is your only hope. What great element is wanting in a life guided by such a hope?" We need courage in all our works for the salvation of our country,—not that courage born of the baser impulses of man which brings ignominy and shame to a nation. The heaven of our courage is surcharged with that pure element of spirituality where animal propensities can never enter.

It is often asked by those who have not studied the man, whether it was courage or cowardice that prompted Aravinda to elude the eagle-eyed-police detectives, and fled to a French possession when a warrant was issued in

March 1910 to arrest him for his writing in the "*Karmayogin*" of 25th December 1909? Outwardly speaking it smacks of cowardice, but a life must not be judged by outward circumstances only. We must try to get into the spirit of the action. Should we sacrifice our spiritual interests for the sake of being reckoned heroic in a mundane affair? God wanted Aravinda for some higher purpose than that of being defiant in meeting a criminal charge. We are all instruments at the hand of God, and whatever He wishes us to do, we must do first, no matter what others should speak of it. We judge a man by his actions only; we cannot pry into his thoughts. God judges a man by his thoughts first, and He knows better what command He gave to Aravinda when the warrant for his arrest was issued. It is in submitting to God's will that the grandeur of human life lies, no matter whether others like it or not. Aravinda did what God told him to do, and he was right.

CONCLUSION.

CHAPTER X.

THE life of Aravinda teaches a great lesson. It tells us how we can serve our country sacrificing our little 'self' at the altar of the motherland. It is a life fraught with those elements that raise a person to the sphere of the gods. India has need of such *Rishis* for the uplift of the nation. Though many are the events that have a doleful tale to relate in the life of our hero, yet we always see him hopeful and courageous in all that he does. It is said that he has not been successful in his life. The "success" and "distinction" of which we speak so much in these days, are justifiable only in a conventional sense. If we find a man knocking hard at the door of fortune but baffled often in his attempts, we are apt to call him "not successful" in his enterprise. Ofcourse the man is not successful from a worldly standpoint. He has not got the thing for which he contended, but that is

no reason why we should murmur. It is not expected that every one who runs a race should win. Win or not, we should have the consolation of having run our race. Success is certainly not synonymous with getting something, be it money or high post. How little are our ideas! An old man had an only son whom, he as a father, gave a good education, but the poor fellow with all his education could not get into a big Government service, and the old father always repeated "you have not been successful after all"! What a crude notion! What a queer idea! Success in life does not mean any high post or making money or receiving any dowry; it is something higher than that which smacks of sordidness. It is that which gives us the satisfaction of having done our duty, whether we get anything or not. Aravinda was surely more successful in this sense than many others.

Aravinda felt keenly the disadvantages attached to Indian nationality; and, whenever he saw a native of India crying for help from the persecutions of an alien, he, cried out from the depths of his heart "horrid cruelty"! So long as the people of India are habitually described, with coolness and deliberation, as 'those horrid

natives' and as 'niggers,' so long as legislative measures, intended to place Indians and Englishmen equally under the jurisdiction, civil and criminal, of courts presided over by natives of India, are caricatured, it will be difficult to avoid the belief that the Anglo-Indians set store by his complexion and has a repugnance to the skin of his Indian fellow subject. Aravinda sharply criticised all such proceedings as tended to the failure of justice; he mercilessly exposed dishonest deliberate deviations from the law, and other political tyrannies of the rulers.

It is because the spirit of English law, and English policy are not invariably carried out in a rigorous and consistent way, that there is room for criticism. Aravinda devoted his life to criticism, and the men of the New School of thought are endeavouring to follow in his footsteps. They know that they have obtained their charters,—a number of statutes, and the proclamation of 1858; and their criticism, though a little too severe, is directed to securing the faithful observance, in practical life, of the terms of these charters. They want that the principles of these charters should receive practical application in the details of life.

and be carried out to their full logical consequences.

Now the question may arise whether these people are loyal. Loyalty surely does not mean slavery to the English rule. If that be so, then it goes to put a stain on the fair name of England. We have certain rights and our legitimate demand for those rights on lawful grounds by criticising Government measures does not mean fanning the embers of disaffection. There is oppression in the land by the rulers, and if we raise our voice against this, would it mean exhibiting disloyalty? Aravinda was no doubt merciless in his criticism of Government measures and he appealed to the national conscience to stand up and fight against them, but that is not disloyalty.

Aravinda's patriotism was rather of the concrete than the abstract sort. Our patriotism is rather of the abstract sort. Small is the number of Indians who feel for other Indians in the same way as Aravinda did. The sense of nationality is wanting; the conception of duty is wanting. In the highest classes the feeling of jealousy is the most predominant. These unhappy elements

require to be removed to make room for patriotism of the practical sort. It was Aravinda's aim to remove these barriers towards the fulfilment of our ideal of political campaign.

Aravinda's work will remain as a precious legacy to his countrymen, and will go to teach how we can serve our country. Indeed he received very little as reward for his services from his countrymen, but that should not damp our ardour of work in the cause of the country. Indeed many were the troubles that passed over him, but he was reckless of all that and worked in the hope of seeing the Sinai of freedom. However perilous and cheerless the journey of life, life's duties must be done. In darkness, and in storm, on the raging waves, and under bursting clouds, let each man do his work and leave the rest to God. A life like that of Aravinda will serve as a beacon light. Sorrow has its lessons, its triumphs and its joys. A life nursed on the lap of sorrows has more lessons to teach than the pampered life of luxury. His life presents a model unsurpassed in the whole history of Patriotism, and we can do no more to show our love to the country, than to follow his examples in life.

